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THE COSMOPOLITAN

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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One Year
\$1.00

BRVINGTON,
NEW YORK.

VOL. XXII

EDITED BY
JOHN BRISBEN WALKER.

NUMBER 1

Gilbert Magazine Exchange

313 E. & B. BLDG.,

ROCHESTER, - - - N. Y.

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DEALING IN FUTURES.*

BY ALICE W. ROLLINS.

SCENE.—A luxuriously furnished drawing-room; the only essentials: a fire in the grate, a piano, a small table with decanter and glasses, a volume of Henley's Verses, a long mirror, and a screen.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HARRY, a young gentleman of thirty.
HARRY'S GREAT-GRANDFATHER.
HARRY'S OTHER GREAT-GRANDFATHER.
HARRY'S FUTURE SON.

HARRY'S FUTURE DAUGHTER.

PHILIP, }
TOMMY, } Harry's future grandchildren.
ETHEL, }
HELEN, } two young ladies of the present.
MABEL, }
MISS ST. CLAIR, a doll.

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Harry, after remaining a few moments in a big arm-chair, reflecting, rises slowly and leans against the mantel: "Well, after all, it concerns no one but myself, and I am my own master. I can do as I please. The only trouble is to know exactly what I do please. I've half a mind to leave it to chance."

Voice, from room on the right: "Wait a minute, Harry."

Harry: "Why, what is that? I thought everyone went to bed an hour ago; and I don't recognize the voice." He steps in the direction of the voice. Enters, towards him, a fine-looking old gentleman.

Old Gentleman: "Ah, good evening, Harry, my boy. You don't know me, I see?"

Harry: "I didn't recognize your voice, sir. Have you just arrived?"

Old Gentleman: "Just arrived. Not by the late train, however. It is Halloween, you remember; the one night in the year when we ghosts—"

Harry: "Ghosts?"

Old Gentleman: "Yes, my boy, ghosts. I am the ghost of your great-grandfather."

Harry: "A very delightful ghost, I am sure. And you come from—"

Old Gentleman: "From heaven, Harry, from heaven."

Harry: "I was certain of that. This is very interesting. Will you sit down, sir? I am particularly anxious tonight to know what heaven is like. Is it having everything you want?"

Old Gentleman: "No; it is knowing what you do want, in addition to liking what you happen to have. It isn't that everything is interesting, but that you are always interested."

Harry: "Knowing what you do want! I can understand that. It would be heaven on earth for me tonight to know exactly what I want. You see, I cannot decide which of two lovely girls to marry."

Old Gentleman: "You love one of them, I suppose, and the other is rich?"

Harry: "Oh no! You mustn't think so meanly of me as that. You must not suppose I would marry a girl I did not love, merely because she was rich. The trouble is, I'm in love with them both."

Old Gentleman: "Oh! with both?"

Harry: "Yes, sir, with both."

Old Gentleman: "And you could have either of them?"

Harry, simply: "Why, of course."

Old Gentleman: "Well, I wouldn't be too sure of that, if I were you. Sometimes they surprise you. However, I wish to warn you that you are not really in love with either, and if I were you, I would wait to be really in love."

Harry: "But I assure you, sir, I am very much in love."

Old Gentleman: "Oh no, Harry; no man ever loved two women—at a time. But, if you think so, why not marry the rich one? Riches ought not to count too much in a girl's favor, but then, again, they ought not to weigh against her. Why are you troubled about the wealth, if you love both the girls?"

Harry, slowly: "Why, you see—"

Old Gentleman, smiling: "Yes, I see, more than you think I do. I believe you are a little in love, after all. Well, let the love grow, and wait a bit; then, in the course of time—"

Harry, impatiently: "Well, sir?"

Old Gentleman: "She will decide for you."

Harry: "But which she?"

Old Gentleman: "The one you love. I went through the same experience, at your age—"

Harry, eagerly: "And what did you decide, sir?"

Old Gentleman, quizzically: "Didn't I tell you that I decided to go to heaven, young man?"

Harry: "Yes, of course; and I am ready to make any sacrifice to go to heaven myself; only I can't decide what would be heaven. Of course, it wouldn't be heaven to marry a girl I didn't love; but then, to marry a girl I did love, and not be able to take her to the theater once a week, wouldn't be heaven, either. And then, again, I might be loving the wrong woman, and by-and-by, after I had married her, find I didn't love her; then I shouldn't have either the girl I loved or the things I liked. After all, sir, the things of this world make up a good deal of our enjoyment of it. You can't be sure that you will always love the woman you think you love; but you can be absolutely certain that you will always like the things that you like."

Old Gentleman: "But you must be very careful not to throw yourself away, Harry. You see, I feel, in a measure,

responsible for you. It's a hard thing to feel that, perhaps, you have handed down all your worst traits to some fine young fellow in the next generation,—by the way, Harry, you *are* a fine young fellow, I hope?"

Harry, smiling: "I come of good stock, sir."

Old Gentleman: "Yes, that is true; your great-grandmama was an Eliot, as they say in Boston; a young fellow with such a great-grandmama ought to be something of a man. But for fear you might have inherited some of my less fortunate traits, I gave up going to the theater tonight—"

Harry: "But I beg of you, sir, not to feel the weight of my deeds on your conscience. After all, you know, a man must be his own master. I assure you, I shall never think of laying the blame for my decision upon you."

Old Gentleman: "Not for your decision, of course. I don't expect to be responsible for your decision; I was only afraid I might be responsible for your indecision. Lots of people, Harry, will advise you never to do anything that will make you ashamed of yourself; but I have come quite frankly to ask you a favor: I wish very much you would be so good as never to do anything that will make me ashamed of myself. Now, your great-grandmama—"

Harry, smiling: "What a pity a man cannot marry a great-grandmama!"

Old Gentleman: "But you see, he does marry the great-grandmama of his future great-grandchildren. The trouble is, he never thinks about them; it is only some hundred years later, when he himself is in the grave, that he begins to wonder whether he treated them quite fairly in his choice of a great-grandmother for them. And then, when you think that perhaps you have sent some fine young fellow into the world handicapped with a few of your own worst traits, you begin to feel then, Harry, as if you wished you could begin all over again. I should choose the same great-grandmama for you that I did before; but as for myself—I might—"(slowly) "yes, I might—"

Harry, smiling: "And then again you might not. Don't have me on your conscience, I beg of you, sir. I assure you, I'm a very good sort of a fellow on the

whole, and in a world where most of the people are sinners, I should be ashamed not to take my share of a few human foibles. If one is a human being, he ought not to be ashamed of being human. I assure you, I should quite hate to be a saint, I don't mind the few bad qualities you may have given me, a bit, sir; I rather enjoy them. One wants to know the world as it is."

Old Gentleman: "Yes, of course, of course. One wants to know the world; but then there is another point of view about that. We like to know the world; but did it ever occur to you that we have the honor of making the world that our great-grandchildren will want to know? Now, if you stop to think about it, it really is quite as interesting to make history as to read it. We ought to enjoy making a world as well as knowing one."

Harry: "Quite true, sir. But doesn't it seem a little egotistic, to assume that to be an editorial 'we'? One man can't make a world or change one very much. I think every man wants his fling once in his life. It's a very good kind of a world on the whole, that you have handed down to me; and I'm afraid if you had left out a few of the things that weigh on your conscience, I shouldn't have liked it half so well."

Old Gentleman: "Well, I'm glad you like it, Harry—I'm glad you like it, and I think I can trust you." (Rising and going towards the young man.) "You have your grandmother's eyes. Those are eyes that can be trusted. I must be going now. Good-by, good-by! and take good care of yourself. Don't make any mistakes—for my sake."

Harry: "But don't you think, sir, that if ghosts return to beg you not to make a mistake, they ought to bring with them at least the ghost of an idea as to what would be a mistake?"

Old Gentleman: "O well, as you observed just now, you want to be your own master in some things. Good-by, good-by, my boy!"

Harry: "Good-by. Why, who is that?" as another old gentleman, dilapidated in appearance, enters. The two old men glance at each other, then the first exclaims:

Old Gentleman: "Why, Jack, is that

you? How long it is since I've seen you! Where have you been all this time?"

Second Old Gentleman: "Well, I've been—I've been away. Haven't met you, I think, since the day we laid you away in Greenwood. Terribly cold, raw day; do you remember it? I recollect feeling so badly as I turned away from your new-made grave and said to myself, 'another fine fellow gone!' that I had to go and take a drink. And then it was such a cold day, blustering, you remember, and raining a little, that I had to take another. To tell you the truth, Sinclair, that was the beginning of my downfall. It's a strange world, isn't it? Your virtues to blame for my vices. If I hadn't been so sorry about losing you and your many virtues, I never should have had to drown my grief in brandy." (Turning to Harry.) "This is our great-grandson, I suppose? How-de-do?"

Harry, with dignity: "Excuse me; this other gentleman is my great-grandfather, I believe."

Second Old Gentleman: "Yes, of course, of course; he is one of them, but I am another. People may have four, you know."

Harry: "And you come from—"

Second Old Gentleman: "Why, being the other great-grandfather, I ought, you

know, to come from the other place; and I always do as I ought—always, always, eh! Sinclair? What, going?"

First Old Gentleman: "I must be going, I'm afraid," (wistfully) "but, Jack, I hope you're not going to influence Harry?"

Second Old Gentleman: "Influence Harry? No, indeed. I'm only going to warn him. Warnings are better than advice, Sinclair, take my word for it. To be sure, my word isn't as valuable as I wish it were; but I'll do my best for him. That is, I'll do my worst for him, which will be a warning, you may depend. Really going? I wish I wanted to go with you; but I'm afraid it's too late for me even to wish to want to do the right thing. Good-by, good-by!"

Harry, holding out his hand to first old gentleman, and glancing curiously at the second: "Good-by, sir. My kindest regards to great-grandmama."

Second old gentleman and Harry come back into the room, towards the table.

Second Old Gentleman: "Ah! a fire! that's home-like, very. And is it whisky I see there?"

Harry: "Help yourself, I beg." (Satirically, as the old gentlemen does help himself.)

Second Old Gentleman, tasting: "Hump! tolerable, tolerable. A little tame, but tolerable."

Harry: "I could hardly expect to vie with the brands of his Satanic Majesty, you know."

Old Gentleman: "O well, for the matter of that, Satan hasn't any whisky to boast of. That is, of course, there is whisky, and very strong whisky, but somehow it seems to have lost its flavor lately. Can't find any that seems to have any strength to it. Just the same with cigars; I went all over hell yesterday afternoon after a good cigar, and couldn't get nearly as good a one as I used to smoke in New York."

Harry: "Why don't you advise Satan to import his cigars from New York?"

Old Gentleman: "Oh, the trouble isn't in the cigars; they are strong enough; the trouble is in me; I've lost my enjoyment



"ALL I WANT OF YOU, SIR, IS A GOOD CONSTITUTION."

of them. They grow stronger and stronger, but they seem to grow weaker and weaker; and it's what things seem that makes the difference. Do you want to know what hell is, Harry? It isn't sulphur, and it isn't burning flames; it's just losing your interest in things. You're not punished at all, or deprived of anything. Everything you ever had is there, but you've lost your interest; and I tell you it's very wearying not to be interested in anything. Why, this afternoon I was so excited to find myself moved by a faint ghost of a qualm of conscience, that I determined to make the most of it and see it out. That's why I came to see you; I want to give you,—not advice, my dear fellow, don't be afraid; not advice, but a warning."

Harry, coldly: "I appreciate the honor of the visit."

Old Gentleman: "Yes. You see, I don't mind being a devil of a fellow myself; but when it came over me that perhaps I had handed down some of my unfortunate tastes to a descendant or two, I really felt as if I wanted to let them know just what was ahead of them. It was so exciting to feel interested in something, even in my descendants, that I quite lost my head over it, and stumbled in here. Couldn't quite bear to think of a fine young fellow like you—you *are* a fine young fellow, I suppose, Harry?"

Harry: "I come from—mixed stock."

Old Gentleman: "Precisely, precisely; just like all the rest of us. Well, it seemed a pity you shouldn't know. Somebody said once that there's no need of asking a man *why* he does so and so, if you can only manage to show him *what* he is doing. I just wanted to give you one bit of advice; whatever else you make up your mind to do, Harry, *don't marry the wrong woman!*"

Harry: "But, my dear sir, I am particularly anxious not to marry the wrong woman. The trouble is, to know which is the wrong woman!"

Old Gentleman: "O well, that is your own affair. Of course, every man wishes to be his own master when it comes to the point. You wouldn't want me to dictate to you; I only want to warn you. I suppose you've been warned many a time of the horrors of *hades*; but I tell you, you don't know anything about it. Mind you,

there's no torture, as I said before; there's nothing but deadly weariness: you're tired of everything. First, you get tired of the right things, and then, the worst of it is, you'll get tired of the wrong things. Going to the devil is all very well. I confess there's a good deal of fun in it; but you're always expecting something more; something more and more exciting. And when you get there, and find there isn't anything more, and that there isn't any devil, and that you've simply got to be your own devil and live in your own hell, all I can say is that you have a devilish hard time of it. And there's no hope of release. If you get tired of heaven, you can always go to the other place; but if you get tired of the other place, where can you go? The fact is, Harry, I'm tired of hell! Just tired of it; that's all; I don't have to stay there; but the trouble is, there is nowhere else to go. The way is open to get back to heaven, but the trouble is, I can't get up any interest even in going back. I repent as far as this: I really wish I wanted to go back; but I can't want to. Well, goodnight! I see I am disturbing you. Only take my word for it, Harry; *don't marry the wrong woman.*" (Music: Overture.)

Harry watches him disappear. Then smiling bitterly, he throws himself again in the arm-chair.

Harry: "So I'm a near relative, it seems, of a man like that! And then we talk about free will! I am free about doing as I wish, granted; but I'm evidently not free about wishing what to do. I've inherited traits, it seems, from a very mixed set of ancestors, that make me wish to do very possibly what I don't like wishing to do. I cannot see any way out of it but to cut the Gordian knot of inheritance, and at least act as if I were my own master. There is one comfort, at least, it concerns only myself for the future."

Again he draws near the table and the bits of paper. (Music.)

Voice, from inner room on the left: "Are you in here, sir?"

Harry: "What! another ghost of the past?"

Voice: "No; this time it's a ghost of the future." (A bright young fellow of eighteen comes forward eagerly, with

frank smile and candid eyes.) "They told me I should find my father in here, sir. I'm very glad to meet you. You see, Hallowe'en is my only chance of seeing you before I am born; and to tell you the truth, I wanted very much to ask you for something."

Harry: "Anything, anything, my boy. So you are my future son? I'm very glad to see you, very glad to see you, indeed; for you seem like a fine fellow. You *are* a fine fellow, I hope?"

Son: "I hope so, sir. I come—that is, I hope I'm going to come—from fine stock."

Harry: "You shall, my boy, you shall. And now what can I do for you? I always said I meant to be very good to my son from the day he was born."

Son: "Ah! but you see, the time to be *very* good to us is before we are born. Of course, sir, you will want me to have ambitions and aspirations and all that sort of thing?"

Harry: "Of course, my boy, of course, and what is your ambition?"

Son: "I want to break the record for the high jump. And you see I can't do that unless I inherit a good constitution. All I want of you, sir, is a good constitution!"

Harry, sadly: "Is that all? Don't you want a few of my good traits of character handed down to you?"

Son: "Oh, yes; I should rather like a few good traits as a background, perhaps."

Harry: "And how about my bad ones?"

Son, merrily: "Oh, don't give me any of those, please! I shall have bad ones enough of my own; trust me for that!"

Harry, severely: "No, you won't, sir; I shall whip them all out of you before you're ten years old."

Son: "But wouldn't it be saving yourself trouble, sir, if you didn't give me any bad traits, instead of having to whip them out of me after they were there? I don't want to be hard on you, but don't you think, father, you are keeping rather late hours for a man who wants his son to break the record?"

Harry: "Well, you see, tonight is Hallowe'en, and the ghosts only appear after midnight. If I hadn't sat up tonight, I shouldn't have had the pleasure of meeting you." (Aside.) "This having to apologize to your own son is rather hard on a man it seems to me."

Son: "Well, I'll forgive you if it's only for tonight. But I'm very much afraid, papa, it isn't only for tonight. However, I'll excuse it, if you'll only keep down the average. And about those few bad traits, I don't think I should mind having a few. I don't believe I should like being a saint. It seems to me if you are human, you want to be human. There's just as much snobbishness in trying to be better than other fellows as in trying to be richer, or stronger. After all, you want to know the world, and you want to know the world as it is."

Harry: "Of course, of course, my boy. But there's another point of view that you don't seem to catch. A moment ago, you were wanting to be stronger than other fellows, at least in the matter of a high jump, and I shall turn upon you with the reminder that it is no more snobbish to want to be better than other fellows than to want to be stronger. And as for knowing the world, of course we want to know the world we are in; but did it ever occur to you that what we call knowing the world is in reality making the world that the next generation will be in, and want to know? Now it ought to be more interesting to make history than to read history. We ought to like making a new world better than seeing a world already made. Why, it's a grand conception, my boy! Just think of being the Napoleon of the next generation, and fixing things for them before they are born! No chance of being exiled to St. Helena, either, when you decide the fate of subjects still unborn."

Son: "Yes, that would be all very fine if you could be a Napoleon; but one man can't make a world, or change one much, if any. Seems to me it would be rather egotistic for me to consider myself the pivot of the universe in thinking over the next generation. I guess they'll be able to take care of themselves as they come along. Only I do mean to leave a record for a high jump that they'll find it hard to break."

Old Gentleman, from inner room on the right: "Ask him, Harry, for the score!"

Harry, smiling: "That's your great-great-grandfather in heaven; he wants to know the score."

Son, running in direction of the voice, and calling out: "Well, I don't quite

know yet, sir, what the score's going to be, but I mean to keep it up to yours if I can. Yours I think was—"

Old Gentleman, from inner room: "Three-score and ten, my boy. But make it bigger if you can! That's one advantage of being dead; you don't mind being beaten, if it's still your own flesh and blood that beats."

Son, comes back to his chair, but pauses suddenly: "Perhaps my other great-great-grandfather would like to know—the score?"

Harry, sadly: "No, I'm afraid not. He says he has lost his interest in things. He still has all his things, but he has lost his interest in them. By the way,—"

(The son is inadvertently passing in front of his father, but steps back, smiling.)

Son: "Excuse me; after you, sir."

Harry: "Well, that's very polite of you, my son; but really I'd quite as lief you would come first. Suppose you do come first, and let me inherit your qualities instead of you mine? I'd be glad to shift the responsibility."

Son: "I should be very glad to oblige you, if I could, but fate is fate; after you, sir! Indeed, I didn't mean to ask for much of you; but, you see, it is hard on a fellow to start handicapped." (They pass on to their chairs.)

Harry: "But do you realize all you are asking of me in demanding an heredity that neither you nor I can regret? If you dread being handicapped by my mistakes, think of the ancestors behind me! Think how I have been handicapped myself. Generation after generation—ah, if they had all been just a little braver—if only once they had ever thought of us! but now it is too late!"

Son: "Is life so hard, father? Then I believe I had rather not be born at all."

Harry: Oh no! no! Shame on the man who dares to be discouraging! Indeed, my boy, half the charm of life is in the battle. And even if you fail, there is a splendor of grim courage for enduring that is worth keeping on for. Hear this poem of Henley's: " (Taking up the volume from the table.)

" Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul,

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced or cried aloud;
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the Shade;
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll;
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."

Son: "Ah, yes, father, if I *am* the captain! I don't mind fighting if I can be captain; and I don't mind my own mistakes, and being defeated, if I have to be defeated,—if I can only start fair. But, you see, it is hard, just as you begin, to have the traits of some confounded ancestor or other—"

Harry, with dignity: "Excuse me; you forget that one of your ancestors is present."

Son: "I beg your pardon. I really did not mean to be rude. It was probably the rudeness of some of those ancestors that overcame me and made me forget myself."

Harry, smiling: "Ah, well! I always said I meant to be friends with my son, when I had one. Will you take something with me?"

Son: "Thank you, I don't mind if I do. What is it?"

Harry: "It's whisky. Do you happen to like whisky?"

Son: "How can I tell when I've never had any yet? But I imagine I shall like whatever you like, sir."

Harry: "Well, I do like whisky." (Starting to pour a glass, then interrupting.) "But I must warn you that it isn't good for people who want to break records. Now, sir," (putting the bottle down and straightening himself with his hands behind his back), "let me see how much power to resist temptation you have inherited from your—your great-great-grandfather."

(Music: Air from Auld Lang Syne.)

The boy hesitates and looks longingly at the bottle, finally reaching out his hand towards it. Harry quietly puts it up on the mantel.

Harry: "After all, whisky is hardly worth so much struggle about. This isn't so good as I should like to give a son of mine the first night I make his acquaintance. We'll have some apollinaris later.



"NO, I WON'T BE HARD ON YOU."

But about the inherited traits; don't you think your mother will have to be responsible for some of them?"

Son: "Oh, of course! But, then, you see, you will be responsible for giving me the right kind of mother. Oh, I'm sure to inherit a lot of fine things from my mother. It's you, sir, that I'm afraid of."

Harry: "Well, my son, just before you came in, I had the pleasure of an interview with your great-great-grandfather, who told me the same thing. He wants me to do great things so that he needn't be ashamed of himself, and you want me to do great things so that you can be proud of yourself. I don't see where I come in at all. What becomes of my own individuality, if I've got to do everything he has made me want to do, and everything you expect me to do? Half of my virtues will be his, and the other half yours. What becomes of the Ego? Of course, you know all about the Ego? You study Kant, I suppose, at the university?"

Son: "Kant? Kant? never heard of him. They're always telling me at school that there's no such word as can't."

Harry: "True, there isn't. And there doesn't seem to be any such thing as an Ego. But then—"

Son, rising: "I'm very sorry sir; but

I shall have to go. They only gave me fifteen minutes to see life in."

Harry, sighing: "Sometimes that's enough; sometimes that's quite enough; but—(stretching out his hand) don't go yet?"

Son: "Very sorry sir, but I must. This is positively my first appearance, but it isn't my last. I can't plead that I have any engagement with you yet, sir, but I'll see you later!" Exit. (Music.)

Harry, watches him disappear, thoughtfully: "He'll see me later! I hope I shan't be afraid to meet him again. But really he scares me worse than my great-grandfather. Of course, I want him to break the record, but that leaves me with the responsibility of making a record for him worth breaking." (Music.)

He sinks into his chair, and buries his face in his hands: then suddenly starts up and calls:

Harry: "Harry! Harry!" (There is no answer. He calls again.) "Harry! Harry, my son!" (Son appears in the doorway.)

Son: "Did you call me, sir? You must excuse me for not recognizing my own name; but, you see, I didn't know what my own name is to be."

Harry, severely: "You will be named for me, sir, whatever happens. And see to it that you never disgrace the name. I won't detain you; I only wanted to ask—have you any brothers and sisters?"

Son: "I've a lovely sister, sir. Would you like to see her? I'll call her." (Calls.) "Mabel!" Exit, calling.

Harry, starts: "Mabel!" (Enter a lovely young girl in white.)

Daughter: "Good-evening, papa! Harry said you wanted to see me?"

Harry: "Good-evening, my—dear. I suppose a man may say 'my dear' to his own daughter, even if it is the first time he ever saw her!"

Daughter, smiling: "O yes, of course! That is, if *he* is a dear."

Harry: "And may I ask you just one thing? It's not out of curiosity, I assure you; but would you mind telling me whether you were named for your mama?"

Daughter, merrily: "How can I tell? I haven't seen my mama yet."

Harry, eagerly: "Then why not send for her? Ask her to come in, too. I

should like very much to see her myself."

Daughter, shaking her head: "No, we can only see one ghost at a time tonight."

Harry, starting: "Ghost? I hope you don't take me for a ghost?"

Daughter: "You're a very nice ghost, I am sure, and I should like to answer your question, but I really don't know. Perhaps I am named for mama; but, then, perhaps I am named for one of mama's friends."

Harry: "But don't you think that if Harry takes all his qualities from me, you ought to depend upon your mama for yours?"

Daughter: "Yes, I suppose mama will give me most of my things; but then I thought you might have a good deal of influence with her."

Harry: "Things? Things? And what sort of things do you want to have, my—dear?"

Daughter: "Well, I want mama to leave me all her Worth dresses—"

Harry: "But they will be all out of fashion by the time you want them. Better have new ones. You'll have to come to me for them, after all; mama may order them, but papa has to pay the bills; so it's papa you must ask, and I shall be delighted to give you everything you want; or, no!" (Stopping suddenly.) "I believe fathers always have to be teased for things. When daughters want things, they're very affectionate, and talk a good while very prettily, and kiss their papa's forehead, and rumple up his hair, don't they?"

Daughter: "I dare say; I don't know, because I haven't been a daughter yet. But I dare say I shall tease you when the time comes, and perhaps I shall rumple up your hair; only you don't seem to have much hair to rumple."

Harry: "True, I haven't much, have I? I'm growing old, I'm growing old; but then I might rumple up yours, if mine gave out."

Daughter: "Well, perhaps so, when the time comes. But you'll have to excuse me now, papa. I'm very busy today. I'm learning a new song; would you like to hear it?" (Sits down to the piano and sings *The Song of the Rose*.)

Harry: "Ah, that is charming! Now isn't there anything I can do for you?"

Daughter, eagerly: "Why, yes! now I think of it, Harry said you were busy making history for us to learn. But I hate history, and when I go to school I shall have to study it, I suppose. So please, papa, if you're writing a history, make it a nice one and easy for us to learn!"

Harry, gently: "I will try, dear. But you won't be hard on me if it isn't always easy?"

Daughter: "No, I won't be hard on you." (She walks toward him, takes a rose from her breast and fastens it in his buttonhole, singing over *The Song of the Rose*, and gradually stepping back as she finishes the last verse):

"The sweetest flower that grows
I give you as we part;
To you it is a rose,
To me it is my heart.

The fragrance it exhales
Is of my life a part;
To you, alas! a rose,
To me it is my heart."

He watches her disappear; then turns slowly with tears in his eyes, and exclaims softly and solemnly: "So it seems we make women's hearts as well as win them."

(Music: Air of Annie Laurie.)

As it ceases, Harry exclaims: "But



"BEATRICE GERALDINE ST. CLAIR, I HUMBLY BEG YOUR PARDON."

she'll be somebody else's Annie Laurie. Somebody else will have the pleasure of dying for her. I, it seems, must brace up and live for her. And there is one thing about it: she will want an awful lot of money. Perhaps, for her sake, if not for my own, I must—"

He sinks into a chair and buries his face in his hands. Then a call from inner room at the back:

"Grandpapa! Grandpapa! Please, may we come in?"

He starts from his chair.

"Another generation? Really, this is almost too much. Being taken down by your ancestors and brought up by your posterity, all in one evening, is exhausting, very." (Answers): "That depends on you, children! Are you very nice children?"

Voice: "That depends upon you, grandpapa! Are you a very nice grandpapa?"

Harry: "Oh, very nice! Capital fellow, I am! Come in, my dears!"

He suddenly remembers the bottle of whisky. Takes it from the mantel, puts it back on the table, and then carefully places the screen round the table. (Enter three children.)

Harry: "Good evening, children, I suppose it's sweetmeats?" (Fumbling in his pockets.)

Ethel, gravely: "No, grandpapa, we didn't come for sweetmeats."

Harry: "No sweetmeats? I'm afraid then you've come for some more of my good qualities, and, to tell you the truth, they've almost given out, too. But tell me one thing; are there any more of you? Is there another generation back of you? I mean, ahead of you? Have *you* any children?"

Ethel, eagerly: "Yes, indeed!" (She rushes back to the inner room and returns with six dolls in her arms.)

Ethel: "These are my children!"

He takes one of them gravely in his hand, holds her aloof and exclaims—

Harry: "Thank heaven! At last I have reached a generation for whose frailties I shall not be responsible! After all, however, a wooden doll may be virtuous, but she is not at all interesting. I believe I'd rather play on a human instrument, even if it gives out a false note once in a while." (He throws the doll on the floor.)

Ethel, darting forward indignantly and

stamping her foot: "Grandpapa, that is very, very unkind of you; I would never have believed it."

Harry: "Hoity toity! but you mustn't do that, my dear; I don't like little girls that stamp their feet."

Ethel: "And I don't like grandpapas that hurt people's feelings."

Harry: "Did I hurt your feelings, my dear? I'm very sorry."

He picks up the doll, hands her very respectfully to *Ethel*, and bowing low—"I beg your pardon!" (Aside.) "This being educated by your grand-daughter is worse than being reprimanded by your grandfather."

Ethel refuses to take the doll.

Ethel: "You must apologize to her, not to me. It wasn't my feelings that were hurt; it was Eleanor's."

Harry: "So I must apologize to her?" (He props the doll up gravely on a chair, and then, bending his knee, says slowly:) "Mary Anne—"

Ethel, indignantly: "Her name isn't Mary Anne! It's Eleanor Louise Rose Cecilia Beatrice Geraldine St. Clair."

Harry: "Oh, excuse me! I'll try again. Eleanor—" (He turns inquiringly.)

Ethel, prompting: "Louise—"

Harry: "Louise—"

Ethel: "Rose Cecilia—"

Harry: "Rose Cecilia—"

Ethel: "Beatrice Geraldine St. Clair."

Harry: "Beatrice Geraldine St. Clair, —I humbly beg your pardon. Will that do?"

Ethel, mollified, and patting the doll: "Yes, that will do."

Harry, turning suddenly, discovers the older boy peering round the screen.

Harry: "Here, here, Tommy! What's that?"

Boy: "I don't know what it is. But my name isn't Tommy."

Harry: "What is it?"

Boy: "I don't know what it *is*; but I know it isn't Tommy. I don't like Tommy."

Harry: "Well, when you are as old as I am, Tommy—" Starts back, as the boy looks threatening. "Excuse me, Philip—you don't mind my calling you Philip? No? Thank you! Well, by the time you are as old as I am, Philip, and possibly before that, you will find that you don't have everything just as

you like it in this world. Unless you can be born with that full understanding, I advise you to stay where you are and not be born at all."

Philip: "What is that, grandpapa?" (pointing to the whisky bottle.)

Harry, aside: "Now, what in the world shall I tell him? He's too young to know about whisky, and if I tell him it isn't whisky, that will be teaching him to lie." (Aloud.) "It's something to drink, Philip."

Philip: "Can I have some?"

Harry: "Oh no! It isn't good for little boys."

Philip: "How old do you have to be before it begins to be good for you?"

Harry: "Oh, it's the whisky that ought to be old."

Philip: "And do you keep it here so that it can grow old?"

Harry: "Yes, Philip, yes; I keep it here so that we can—grow old—together. Do you mean to say, really, children, that you're not going to make any demands upon me for your future good behavior?"

Philip: "I'm not. I don't want to be good. I want to be bad—real bad."

Harry: "You do, do you? Now, there's a boy after my own heart. And what kind of badness do you like best, Philip? Perhaps I could let you have a little of mine."

Philip: "I like the badness that ties fire-crackers on to cats' tails."

Harry: "Oh, you do! I'm afraid I'm not given to tying fire-crackers to cats' tails."

Philip: "I know you're not, now; but perhaps you did it when you were a little boy."

Harry, aside: "I said I liked playing on the human instrument; but I must say, with Hamlet, it is not so interesting to be played upon, myself."

Other Boy, stepping forward: "If you please, sir, I don't mind being called Tommy, and I'm not going to tie crackers to cats' tails."

Harry: "Indeed, and what are you going to do?"

Other Boy: "I'm going to untie 'em."

Harry: "Oh! I see. A nice little saint—having a good time over other people's sins. You are not going to do anything out of the way yourself, but you want to be there all the same. You want

to be in it, without being to blame for it." (Taking him by the shoulder.) "Do you know what you are? You are not a little saint; you're a little prig, and don't you ever dare to say that you inherited any of your qualities from me." (Sets him down heavily in a chair, and turns to Ethel.) "And now, my dear, what can I do for you—and for Miss St. Clair?"

Ethel: "I'd like—I'd like very much—that is, if you're very rich, grandpapa: are you very rich?"

Harry: "Alas! no, dear. I am only rich in good qualities, and I've had to give most of those away tonight. But if there's anything left that you would like—"

Ethel: "Well, I'd like; very much, if you can afford it, a new dress for Eleanor, and a doll-house, and a set of china dishes, and a music-box, and a doll's carriage, and a pony, and a pair of roller skates, and a purse with a dollar in it, and a gold chain, and a box of candy from Bronson's."

Harry, sinking into a chair: "You shall have them, my dear, if it takes my last penny." (Aside.) "That settles it; I shall have to marry wealth!" (Music.)

Covers his face with his hands. The children go softly out on tiptoe. After a pause, enter softly on tiptoe, Helen, richly dressed, and Mabel simply dressed. Harry is sitting between the screen and the mirror so that as he sits still he cannot be seen.

Helen: "You're sure auntie is asleep? She wanted to know why I dragged that great cheval glass tonight into the drawing-room, but I knew if I told them we were going to try our Hallowe'en fate, somebody would play us a joke. See, Mabel; there is the mirror; you go first."

Mabel, shrinking back: "Oh, no! You go first." (Music: Refrain from Swan Song of Lohengrin.)

Helen steps forward and looks eagerly into the glass, then drops back again.

Helen, sorrowfully: "No, there isn't any face at all in it!"

Mabel: "Then it's no use for me to try."

Helen: "Oh yes, it is! There may be a miracle, you know!"

Harry, hearing voices, has started from his chair. He is still behind the screen, but as he rises, his face is reflected in the

mirror, without his being visible himself. Mabel gives a little shriek and darts away.

Helen: "Why, did you see anything in the mirror?"

Mabel: "Oh no, no! there wasn't anything, of course; there couldn't be anything, you know. But do come! I'm so frightened!"

Helen: "Frightened at nothing?" (She half steps back in curiosity, but Mabel implores her.)

Mabel: "Oh, do come, Helen! please come! please come! I shall die of fright!" (Exit.)

(Music: Air of Annie Laurie.)

Harry slowly comes forward from behind the screen.

Harry: "Those girls must have come down to try their fate in the mirror. And one of them evidently saw me. But which one? Alas! I am, indeed, the plaything of fate. The past, the present and the future all betray me. They give me plenty of advice, they entreat me not to do the wrong thing, as if, good heavens, I wanted to do the wrong thing! But not a soul tells me which the wrong thing is.

I suppose they call deciding that little matter my own individuality, and every one of them will hold me responsible for the results, whatever they are! Ah, well! I remember Mabel quoted something yesterday about

'To the sentinel
That hour is regal when he mounts on guard.'

I am not a Napoleon, to change the face of the world, as my great-grandfather would like to have me; but I am on guard, and the entire world, past, present and future, seem to be hanging on my decision. After all, as it is so momentous," (His face softens and fills with light.) "I must not leave it to chance—I dare not trust myself; tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow—"

(Music: Refrain from Annie Laurie.)

He repeats the word lingeringly and lovingly, "I will ask—Mabel—to decide for me!"

(Curtain.)

Music: Strain from Mendelssohn's Wedding March, with refrain of Fate.





KARMA À LA MODE.

A PROBLEM OF TO-DAY.

BY MRS. ARTHUR GORDON ROSE.



SHE was the flower of fin de siècle civilization. Yet there was something about her that made her best friends speak of her as "queer." Once, when out walking with her nurse, she had whirled and flung herself madly into that nurse's arms at sight of a well-dressed young woman passing by, and had shrieked:

"Don't let Mrs. Bolton take me! Don't let Mrs. Bolton take me! She was my mother once!"

Now, as the name Bolton was unknown to the nurse, and as she had never seen the lady in question before, that astute female immediately recognized something mysteriously suggestive in the action of the child. Visions of changelings, plebeian babies substituted for aristocratic heirs in the cradle; of hidden crimes and ghastly family secrets, coursed darkly through an imagination inflamed by the perusal of "penny dreadfuls" in the intervals when the Princess Paulina deigned to sleep. So that by the time she had conveyed her precious charge, shrieking, back to the family mansion of the DeBurgh Smiths, the incident had gained added features of mystery and dramatic interest. These were retailed with gusto, and the child, listening with open ears and a new sense of her own astonishing peculiarities, on being questioned, asserted calmly that Mrs. Bolton was once her mother, and had ill-treated her, so that she had run away to her present mother.

That mother, being an ordinary, everyday, and very charming personage, and having a very clear memory of all that had attended the entrance of the Princess Paulina into this world of woe, assured her on the spot that, if she did not check her very evident passion for fibbing, in spite of all modern ideas on the subject of corporeal punishment, she would feel it her bounden duty to give her a plain, old-fashioned spanking! So, for the present, the Princess Paulina held her peace.

But there was a member of the DeBurgh Smith family much given to occult studies, and for her the maid's thrilling tale held a deeper significance. Privately, she questioned the child as to her memories and sensations. As privately, she conveyed all these, well garnished, to her familiars, and in process of time the Princess Paulina became an object of deep interest in a certain circle of enthusiastic Searchers after Truth. Year by year the story grew, until it had reached surprising dimensions. So that, one day, when a member of the Society for Psychical Research called socially upon the Student of Occultism, and the ten-year-old child was summoned, her mother was astonished to hear her tell the following tale:

"Mrs. Bolton was my mother. I had another father, too, named Mr. Bolton. We lived in a beautiful house, where there were many trees about. There was a bridge, and I used to go fishing there with a boy. One day, Mrs. Bolton got angry

with me and struck me, and then she threw me on the bed. And my other father came in and asked what was the matter. And Mrs. Bolton said that I was dead. And I *was* dead. And I got up out of myself, and ran and ran and ran and ran until I came to *this* mother."

"Astonishing, indeed!" asseverated the member of the Society for Psychical Research.

"And when you 'got up out of' yourself," questioned the Student of Occultism, with beaming eyes, "did you lie there on the bed, as well as 'run and run'?"

"Oh, yes. *This* part of me stayed there," said the child, patting her plump chest with both hands; "but the *Me* that is inside got out and ran and ran!"

The member of the Society for Psychical Research and the Student of Occultism shook each other by both hands, with radiant faces, while Mrs. DeBurgh Smith sat frowning by.

"Found at last! Oh! This wonderful century! You see, we are nearing the end of the cycle! Can we need any other demonstration than this? Karma be praised! What further proof can be needed, even by the closed and darkened mind, of the truth of the wonderful doctrine of reincarnation?"

The member of the Society for Psychical Research seated himself, with notebook and pencil, and turned to the child with a whole volume of questions on his lips. Then Mrs. DeBurgh Smith arose in her night, and remarked that she refused absolutely to allow her only child to be made the subject of any psychical experiments whatever, and forthwith removed the little girl to her own apartment, where she remained until the gentleman from London had taken his departure.

It was too bad—the entire circle of Searchers after Truth averred—that Mrs. DeBurgh Smith should, in this purely selfish manner, obstruct the advance of that glorious doctrine into the darkened minds of men, especially, as it was afterward discovered,—though through what channel never transpired,—that the gentleman from London was acquainted with just such people as Mr. and Mrs. Bolton in England, who had lost their only child, a little girl, in a very sudden way, about

ten years before; also, that he had often seen just such a bridge and just such a boy! Thus, if any further confirmation of the child's wonderful story could be needed than the inner witness, such confirmation was to be had from a most reputable source. But, they all agreed, it was just such dense materialists as the charming Mrs. DeBurgh Smith who hindered the spread of Truth!

It was under the fostering care of this dense materialist that Paulina grew to womanhood, and became, even in her physical presentment, so rare and delicately lofty a creature as to merit the continuance, among her later acquaintances, of the sobriquet of her childhood: The Princess Paulina.

Tall, and slender as a young sycamore, with a skin which had never been suffered to lose for one day its infantile purity and velvet softness, and a figure made lithe and perfect by every judicious exercise known to the most advanced professor of physical culture, with lips as pure and sweet as perfect health and lofty thoughts could make them, it was only needed that she should add to these charms a small nose of the Grecian style of architecture, hair as fine and soft and vigorous as though the Sutherland sisters had presided over its astral, hands and feet in the prevailing fashion of the day, slender and symmetrical and not too small, and a pair of mystical gray eyes, with lashes of midnight darkness and extraordinary length, for her to produce a profound sensation wherever she appeared. Had she not, however, supplemented these evanescent attractions by others far more singular and enduring, this story would never have been written.

In spite of the sodden stupidity and obstinacy characteristic of such conventional natures as that of Mrs. DeBurgh Smith, the Searchers after Truth had been enabled to keep a watchful eye upon Paulina through that one relative to whom a gleam of the true light had been vouchsafed. So that Paulina was still regarded by them as under the special care of the White Brotherhood,—a being of rare psychic powers, through whom they hoped for great results. She was secretly admitted to their ranks, and became an earnest student, and, later, an expounder of great mysteries. While still at school,



Drawn by F. O. Small.

"A LITTLE DISCONCERTING TO A PLAIN, EVERY-DAY YOUNG MAN OF FASHION."

she contented herself with such minor manifestations of psychic power as the "willing game," or hypnotic experiments in all their varying phases. These gave her great prestige among her comrades, who, one and all, adored her and, as has been already said, agreed that she was "queer."

But unconscious association of ideas, or a subjective memory of that promised spanking, caused her to conceal all this from the knowledge of that misguided woman of fashion, her mother. Only when quite emancipated from school life, and after making a successful *début* into society, and having established herself, after the fashion of the day, in "girl bachelor" quarters in that mother's house, did she venture to speak openly of her occult studies, and to invite her friends to witness psychometric readings and other extraordinary phenomena.

When Mrs. DeBurgh Smith fully comprehended that her daughter was quite in line with one of the fashionable fads of the day, she withdrew any active opposi-

tion to this determined course, and extended no more authority over her attendance at the meetings of the Searchers after Truth than if these meetings had been of the usual, purely innocuous literary character. Had she guessed that, in company with the occult student, Paulina had actually attended spiritualistic séances, and there had sounded all the heights and depths of slate-writings, spirit-rappings, table-tippings, materializations, levitation, and other phenomena, there is no telling what she would have done. But Paulina had now given all that up. She had passed on to a higher plane. Disgusted with the fraudulent practices by which the ordinary medium endeavors to explain and supplement the powers which he does not understand sufficiently to control, she now turned her attention to the deeper mysteries of the Wisdom Religion, and refused longer to use her mysterious powers for the edification or amusement of the common herd.

Princess Paulina was a very wonderful

personage, no doubt, but she could no more help being pretty and bewitching than she could help breathing. Sometimes she did try to stop breathing, in her attempts at Yogi practice, but she generally found that her corsets interfered with these experiments. As she often admitted, she was advanced spiritually, but not advanced sufficiently to give up corsets and to wear divided skirts. In like manner, when she found herself surrounded with ardent and very unspiritual young men, who loved tennis, and dancing, and pretty girls, and cigarettes, and foot-ball, and cricket, and who interfered materially with serious studies, she often thought that she would really like to stop being pretty. This was just as difficult to her, however, as Yogi practice, so that, on the whole, she concluded that, as this unfortunate physical beauty concerned only her present brief incarnation, she might

ball matches; would grow so excited over race-horses, and the doings of the Valkyrie and the Vigilant, and the domestic arrangements of visiting nobility! They had such horrid jokes among themselves, and she was given to understand that they really enjoyed improper stories. For her part, she looked ever for the man of men, who had some inner consciousness of the higher life, and if she was obliged to marry, she would like to marry a man like the great Neo-Platonist Plotinus, who was so modest that "he blushed to think he had a body." This made even the occult relative, who was forty-five and unmarried, give a surreptitious smile.

Thus it was that, while young men at first thronged about the new beauty by the score, they gradually began to drop away, and, where they had spoken of her as "bewitching," they began to whisper that she was a "witch." It was a little

disconcerting to a plain, every-day young man of fashion to have Paulina transfix him with her searching eyes and say: "I can tell you where you were last night, or this day week before last. I can see what you have in your pocket. I can see what you have in your heart. I can read, as in an open book, the inmost impulse of your soul."

Naturally, the young man would at first be staggered, and feel an ardent desire to escape. On second thought he



Drawn by F. O. Small.

SOLITARY MEDITATION.

very well bear with its disadvantages to the end.

She found these perpetual young men very much in the way of her study of deep philosophies. They were such plain, transparent, comprehensible creatures that they were beneath the curiosity of a philosopher and mystic. And they were so gross! she often complained to the occult relative. They were so absorbed in oyster stews, and Loie Fuller, and base-

would, with much bravado, request her to give her facts, her information, and her authority. Now, what was such a plain, ordinary young man to do when, in reply, she would smile inscrutably with her mystical eyes, and refuse to say any more. Then he would hotly enquire for her proofs as to the powers she claimed, whereupon she would softly utter the following enigmatical words:

"They who know require no proof, and

they who cannot comprehend, deserve none."

"Well, who in the devil are 'they who know'?" one young man so far forgot himself as to enquire, whereupon he was summarily and permanently cut off from the light of Paulina's presence.

In any argument, she would gently remind her opponent that it was, of course, impossible for her to convince him, as, being on an altogether lower plane of consciousness, he could not spiritually cognize the standpoint from which she reasoned.

All this was maddening to the average, college-bred young men, who considered themselves up in logic and philosophy, and "all that." They would confide their difficulties to each other, and retail the unbelievable things Paulina had calmly asserted, ending, alas! by dubbing her noble philosophies, and her wonderful logic, and her occult consciousness of things unknowable, "tommy rot."

And so, in spite of her lovely eyes and her carefully cherished charms, in spite of the perfection with which she danced and dressed, and the innocent nature which peeped out from all these cultured graces, Paulina's suitors began to fall away. This did not disturb Paulina in the least. She was busy perfecting her chain of memory of past incarnations, of which in her childhood she had already held the first link. She was assured by the Searchers that her wonderful occult knowledge could only result from deep researches in some former incarnation. One ordinary human life, however prolonged, could not suffice for that comprehension of certain inner mysteries which she had evinced, even had that life belonged to a grandame of ninety years instead of to a beautiful child of eighteen. The fact that she so comprehended these mysteries furnished in itself an incontrovertible proof of reincarnation.

Of a surety, she had delved into the problems of eternity before the age of materialism had dawned, even before this fourth round and fifth race of this especial Manvantara.

She had lately spent much time in solitary meditation, and had exerted herself much in attaining that concentration without which no psychic powers can properly expand. She could now, in her



Drawn by F. O. Small.

THEY FELL OUT VIOLENTLY ON THE WAY HOME.

extraordinary little apartment, all hung about with symbols and strange Eastern devices, close her eyes and cut off all objective consciousness, and distinctly recall that little episode of Mrs. Bolton, and every detail of the bridge and the boy. Nay, she had gone far beyond that and, in her solitary musings, could evoke from the past link after link of that great chain, until she stood on the banks of the Nile. Oh, how clear those vast pyramids shone in the hot Egyptian sunlight! And she, a princess of the sixth dynasty, swarthy and beautiful, searched even then for hidden Truth back in an almost inconceivable antiquity of earthly time. Even then, she had been a marked being, a something rare and strange. It was she whose earthly shell had been laid in the pyramid of Gizeh, in the sepulchre of Mycerinus, when to her physical ear the rustle of the acacia and the sound of the lute were hushed forever.

In most of these reincarnations, Paulina had been able to follow a double chain—that of her own soul, and that of the boy

with whom she had played in England. Here she had lost the thread. Further she could not go. A shadowy memory of something eluded her. The boy—where did the link break? He was there, at her feet, where she loved to see him, in that strange, beautiful Lotus land. He was her brother there, the brother whose murder she had avenged. But behind? What was behind? Where was he? Where was she?

She looked for hours in the great rock-crystal that swung by a chain of gold from the ceiling. She sought the dark depths of her magic mirror in vain. The pyramids, the banks of the Nile, the fluttering wing of the sacred Ibis, the creeping trionyx, the deadly cerastes, her swarthy slaves, the boy himself—all, all were there; but that was all.

Mrs. DeBurgh Smith was beginning to look upon her beautiful daughter with eyes of prescient despair, and contemplating the necessity of interference with these injurious occult studies, when a new element came into Paulina's life, and a new hope dawned for her mother. This hope was materialized in the person of Mr. Herbert Percy Byron, a young gentleman of good family, good character, fortune, and education, who had just completed his career at Oxford, and had returned to his native land to build up his American life on the correct English design. Of course, that would not last long. Mr. Herbert Percy Byron was really a very good fellow, if he did not turn up his trousers, and affect what Paulina called "the brutal English manner."

Like his forerunners, he became immediately fascinated by Paulina's grave smile and radiant personality. But, unlike them, he did not learn to fear her. And if, at first, the rapt look of her mystical eyes struck him as "a trifle affected, don't you know?" he soon regarded it as only a charming peculiarity. Indeed, to him, Paulina's perfections were such that she invariably bettered what was done, and, like Florizel, if she danced, he would have her "do it ever," and even if she "talked through her hat," in the irreverent parlance he sometimes permitted himself, that, too, in time appeared only in keeping with her charming individuality.

When Paulina first heard this young

man's name it appeared to please her. There seemed for her some singular significance about it. She turned upon her mother a gentle gleam of pleasure, and then murmured to the occult relative: "'H. P. B.' How delightful!"

In the young man himself she was distinctly disappointed, but she bore with singular meekness his ignorant tirades against her most cherished beliefs. To be sure, it was rather the meekness of one who pities a delusion which she foresees may yet be cured, than of one who submits. Such, however, as it was, it was a meekness which caused her mother to marvel. Once she was actually persuaded to accompany Mr. Byron to one of those nests of false doctrines, man-made delusions and superstitions—an Episcopal church, but they fell out so violently on the way home that they did not speak for months. Paulina occupied herself more than ever with her deep studies, but she seemed to her mother somewhat pale and grave. There was a secret hope in that mother's breast that she might be like other people after all, if the right chord were touched, and might, in course of time, come to share the common griefs and joys which make up human life for ordinary folk.

By and by, at one of the evening parties of merely conventional people, which Paulina abhorred, Mr. Byron approached her and formally begged permission to call the following day. They had reached a point before their quarrel when Paulina had deigned to call him Percy, ostensibly on account of some traditional friendship between their mothers, and now his heart glowed because she looked up with a friendly smile and said: "Why, Percy, it is a new thing for you to require permission to call. Certainly, come, by all means, and I shall show you my den, where I only take my most particular friends."

In describing this visit afterwards to his most especial chum, Percy used expletives not permissible in polite society, and stamped and raved about his luxurious bachelor apartments, "as though,"—as his friend picturesquely put it,—"all sheol had broke loose!"

"Why do I care for the witch?" groaned Percy, as others had groaned before. "She has no more soul than an

oyster, and no more religion than—than *you* have!" the poor boy ejaculated, seeking the strongest comparison possible. Herbert Percy cherished still the hoary and poetic conceit that "a woman without piety is as the flower without perfume."

"She is so absorbed in this esoteric, Buddhistic, occult, cursed business that she cannot see one inch beyond her nose in ordinary affairs! A man does not want a sorceress, he wants a good, loving, sensible woman!"

"Right you are!" ejaculated that most dense of friends. "That's just what I say. Paulina Smith will be an old maid yet. The man doesn't live who would put up with all that nonsense in a wife!"

In return, Percy growled like a mastiff. "I'll thank you to put a handle to Miss DeBurgh Smith's name, if you *will* talk about her! You are about as capable of understanding a woman like that as my foot!" shaking that member threateningly. "If you are going to be such a superlative ass—get out!"

Left alone, he sat and pondered. Yes, she was most certainly a witch.

Paulina had at last reached the point of discarding corsets. Now, she wore most seductive draperies of clinging Eastern fabrics, swathing her lovely body from throat to heel, yet revealing unexpected glimpses, now of a slender arm, bare to the shoulder, save for some antique bracelet of coins, or a red gold serpent with gleaming emerald eyes; and now of a sandalled, silken foot whose instep Percy would give the world to kiss.

Thus she had appeared the night before, her sleek, modern head rising on its rounded throat from a gown of dull yel-

low, embroidered with a design of lotus-leaves and sacred asps. A silver lamp had swung in a pale radiance near the door, distilling sweet odors and a rising vapor as it burned. There was a vague screen beyond her which seemed vaguer and queerer the more he looked at it, and there was a general hushed air of mystery and illusion about the semi-darkened apartment, and about Paulina herself, which disturbed and angered the young man, even while it beguiled his fancy.

All her talk was of this great religion which embraced all other religions, this science which contradicted no instincts

of the heart, this philosophy which explained all problems of life and nature and the great beyond; of the brotherhood of man, and of that coming day when love should permeate the universe, when man should consciously recall each link in that great chain, both ends of which are centered in the Unspeakable One whose name is Om, and all should realize that each man's Karma is of his own creation. Guided by a knowledge of these truths, humanity should march on gladly and consciously along that path of



Drawn by F. O. Small.

"'RIGHT YOU ARE! THAT'S JUST WHAT I SAY.'"

spiritual evolution which—

"Well?" asked Percy, as Paulina paused, "Whither does it lead?"

What he really meant was: where do I come in, in this ingenious scheme? but he did not dare to say this.

"So far as we can penetrate the mystery," the girl replied, "to a re-absorption in the Divine Essence, to be in-breathed, for one whole Manvantara, Percy, is but an out-breathing and an in-breathing of Brahm!"

"Then there does come a point," persisted this foolish young man, "when

you simply don't know what next. Even the Searchers find a blank wall at last! I thought so!"

"Not at all!" cried the young priestess, with her cheeks aglow. "What more glorious destiny can be conceived than to be in-drawn to the Original First Cause? And that is all we know, but we know there is more beyond."

"I don't see it," Percy declared stubbornly. "At any rate, I am not concerned in what may happen billions of æons of ages hence. It is the present that interests me. I love you. Will you marry me?"



Drawn by F. O. Small

"'WON'T YOU GIVE ME SOME HOPE?'"

Never was it better said, or in a more manly fashion. Never had it been said in a manner better calculated to awaken the scorn and wrath and pitying disdain of this young apostle of a new faith. And yet she said never a word. As Percy watched her, she withdrew her face into the shadow, and it seemed to him that she was very pale. Her eyes seemed to scintillate like the emerald eyes of the serpent on her arm. She looked above and beyond him, off into the perfumed vapor arising from the silver lamp. Through this, and far, far beyond the walls of the room she seemed to look, and her voice had a poignant sweetness when she spoke.

"I see it, at last," she said. "Far back, before the pyramids were builded—before history began—I was there! When the gods governed Egypt, and the sweet god Horus, beloved of the sun, and mystic child of the ark, sat on his throne between the lions, with his finger on his lip, I—and you, too,—Oh!" she cried suddenly, in a sharp tone of pain and incredulity. "No—no. Master! Master! Guru, beloved, drop the veil! I cannot bear it!"

Percy shook her rudely by the arm. He said afterwards that he was afraid that she would faint or keel over in hysterics. Then he picked her up and laid her on the divan, and looked about for water. Before he was driven to the desperate expedient of using ink or mucilage, she spoke gently to him out of the shadow, in her natural tone of voice.

"It is quite impossible, Percy. What you desire would be monstrous."

Then there was silence. The young man's brain seemed to reel. The misty vapors from the lamp filled the room with a compelling fragrance, and something moved behind the screen, with a most blood-curdling "Flop!"

It was only Paulina's sacred Ibis, stirring its awkward, heavy body on its thin, spidery legs; but this he could not know. Then he became aware that, from the mass of dull yellow draperies on the divan, not only the jewelled asps and silken lotus-leaves were shining up at him, but also a pair of glowing eyes. He dropped on his knees beside her, and took her slender hand in his.

"Oh, my dear," he said, as though he were talking to any ordinary woman, "don't say it is impossible! Is it 'monstrous,' because you are so sweet and so far above me? Is it because I am such a good-for-nothing fellow?"

Paulina withdrew her hand, and let her wonderful eyes rest on his.

"No, it is not that," she said.

"Well, why?" he persisted. Surely, she, too, must feel the strong attraction that knit his very soul to hers.

Paulina gathered up her voluminous draperies, and rose to her feet.

"Percy," she said, hesitating. "I *did* think it possible—I really did. But it is quite out of the question. I know more than I did. Something was revealed to

me just now. Ah, Percy—" Tears that seemed to him divine filled her sweet eyes, and she turned her head away. "Do you not know that I, too, suffer? I am only human. All who elect to tread high paths and to overcome,—to eat of the hidden manna and to wear the white stone of the initiate,—*must* suffer! There is an occult reason why we are drawn together, but there is also a reason—no, I do not think the reason is exactly occult—why—I—cannot—(sob)—*cannot* marry you!"

It maddened him to see her cry.

"Whom do you call 'Master'?" he asked roughly, in the very extremity of his tenderness. "Are you going to let this mysterious, imaginary, ridiculous Guru of yours stand between us—between *us*, Paulina, whom God made for each other? Oh, my dear, drop all this business, and marry me! Won't you give me *some* hope, however far off, some sweet hope that it may all come right some day?"

Paulina turned her moist and innocent eyes upon him, shining with a sudden radiance.

"Ah, yes!" she said, extending one slender hand. "Yes, Percy. When Manvantara after Manvantara shall have passed, when this earth shall have gone through many, many rounds, and many, many other races shall have been evolved from this—then, Percy, perhaps—"

* * *

And this is why the young man cursed her for a witch, as he sat alone, and once more lived through that disappointing evening.

He threw aside his cigarette, took down a short pipe and smoked it dejectedly. Truly, she was a witch! What else could account for the electric thrill of mad delight which had penetrated every fiber of his frame in that brief moment when he had held her hand in his?

By and by, he gloomed himself to bed, and fell into the sleep of youth and good digestion.

How long he slept, he knew

not. But he was awakened (so it seemed) by a very penetrating perfume. It reminded him, somehow, of the fragrance emanating from that silver lamp. He opened his eyes, and then he saw that the room was no longer dark, as it had been when he fell asleep. A pale and column-like radiance depended from the ceiling. He rubbed his eyes—for the shining vapor seemed like the vapor arising from that silver lamp. Curling, smoke-like wreaths began to stir in this formless radiance, and from these were evolved whirling masses of thread-like lines, which, in turn, settled into the semblance of a human form. When it began to dawn upon him that this silvery semblance was herself—Paulina—he said to himself comfortably: "It is a dream," and composed himself to regard the vision without any undue emotion of wonder. Just as he had seen her last, she finally stood there, in her yellow gown. Only now the asps kept up a constant procession among the lotus-leaves, writhing, crawling, eternally moving in and out and round and round, until she seemed an embodied, symbolic Nature, compounded of fire, and cloud, and flower, and leaf, and ever evolving sentient life.

Then she spoke.

"Brother of my soul," she said, in that voice of piercing sweetness, "awake to a knowledge of your sodden ignorance! I, who am but an humble Chela, only ar-



Drawn by F. O. Small.

"PERCY RAISED HIMSELF CAUTIOUSLY UPON HIS PILLOW."

rived at any consciousness in this, my present incarnation, beseech you to open your heart to the Great Ones who are ready to aid, at the first motion of an awakened soul. Born under the same star, we are linked by the immutable decree of Karma. Delay me not in the path I have chosen! But before we both pass on to the rest of Devachan, rise to a higher plane of consciousness. Take at least one step along the path of Truth!"

Percy raised himself cautiously upon his pillow. He was afraid of dispelling this dream, yet, in his double consciousness, it seemed to him that he must try an experiment. Fixing his eyes upon the vision as steadily as he could, considering the constant commotion kept up by those wretched little reptiles, he said softly:

"Paulina! tell me the reason why you will not marry me!"

For an instant, the whole thing stood still,—lotus-leaves, asps, and all,—and Paulina stood there before him, all the woman. He even noticed where a dark lock of her hair had escaped and lay curled like a shadow in the hollow of her throat. Had he been near enough, he might have touched her, she was so real. Then she began to fade. Her voice was but as a faint echo of that other voice when she spoke.

"Call me not Paulina, oh, you of little faith! That is but one of my many, many names. Nitocris was my name when I drowned your cruel murderers, and so avenged you. I have always loved you, and I love you now. The petty relations of human life must pass away, but love endures—love, sexless, absolute, divine, eternal! Yet, to convince your blind and puerile human reason, see, I write!"

She passed to his desk, all littered with papers, and bent over them. But, as she stood there, the radiance faded, and the room was dark again. Percy's sleep after that was broken and restless.

Naturally, a dream so vivid and peculiar haunted him, in spite of his anger against Paulina, and it was not surprising that, before a week had elapsed, she should receive an abject note, begging for a renewal of their intercourse.

Paulina tossed the note to her mother with a little moue.

"He wants to come to-night!" she said, with a shrug of her dainty shoulders.

"How unfortunate!" exclaimed that lady. "What shall we do about it?"

Paulina smiled inscrutably. "It is Karma," she said. "Let him come."

And so, when he came, Mrs. DeBurgh Smith went hurriedly to meet him from the brightly lighted drawing-room below.

"My dear Percy," she said, in her kindly voice, "I am sure you will not like it. But there is some one up in Paulina's room." (To this complexion had Percy's visits come, so far as his prospec-



Drawn by F. O. Small.

"DO, MY DEAR BOY, BE POLITE."

tive mother-in-law was concerned, in spite of Paulina's rejection of his suit.)

"It's an Eastern gentleman," she explained, hurriedly, in answer to that eager question in his eye. "Quite a character, I assure you! He will only be here a week, having come to lecture on some of these curious Oriental beliefs. I do not know much about them myself, but they seem to be 'the thing' just now, and he is our guest for the week. I invited

him to please Paulina." Then she paused abruptly, conscious that she had said just the wrong thing, when she marked poor Percy's lowering eye.

"Oh, I suppose she is delighted!" he answered, with a ghastly cheerfulness. "She always had an odd preference for gentlemen of the Orient. Is he colored? Is he a Jap, or a Chinaman, or a Hindu, or what particular kind of an abomination is he?"

"Oh, Percy," she gasped, fairly running after him as he hurried toward the stairway leading to Paulina's den. "Don't go up! Don't go up with those dreadful ideas! He's a high caste Brahman!" the poor lady breathlessly explained, tutored by Paulina. "He wouldn't sleep in any of our beds, or drink out of even my very best cut-glass, or my prettiest Sèvres cups, Paulina says, had he not lost his caste, or, rather, thrown it away, as he has grown beyond it,—and he doesn't like to shake hands with common people like you and me. Do, my dear boy, be polite, if you *will* go up. It is only one of Paulina's ideas. She really, really prefers you to any one she knows. *Do* be patient. And if there is anything queer about the gentleman,—I can't for the life of me, pronounce his name,—*do* bear with it, and don't notice anything, for *my* sake; or, better still, for Paulina's!"

So earnest and kindly were the eyes that implored him, so like Paulina's, save for the mystic light, that Percy bent and kissed her pretty hand.

"I'll do my best," he said, in rather a dubious tone. "Oh, yes, I'll be polite!" he told himself grimly, as he went hastily on towards the light that shone from Paulina's room above.

She seemed to fill the room with her beauty. Never had he seen her as she was to-night. And, indeed, there were few who saw Paulina when she was most beautiful. For the Orientals know how to enhance a woman's loveliness by graceful dress in ways that a Worth or Redfern cannot comprehend. And Paulina wore the Oriental garb only for the chosen few.

To-night she was all in creamy white, of a gauzy and yet opaque texture, soft and shining as moonlight, and threaded with traceries of gold. Her hands were ringless. One great fire-opal clasped her

straight-hanging draperies just beneath the bust, and from one shoulder, just above the wide, flowing sleeve, depended a delicate chain of gold, to which was attached a tiny green chameleon, which leaped, and darted, and shimmered like a thing of flame, now on her sleek, dark head, now on her rosy throat, and now hid itself, palpitating, in the soft, cool swathings of her gown.

When he could tear his eyes away from her, Percy became aware of a strange figure in Eastern garb and turban, sitting cross-legged on the Indian rug at Paulina's feet. She, herself, was standing, with her head turned from him, and her eyes fixed on the magic mirror which hung like a great black pearl against the pale-green hangings of the wall. Both turned, aware of his presence, before he spoke, and Paulina immediately introduced him to her guest. The name sounded like Yajnavalkasamhita, and Percy gripped the slender, dark hand, with a savage recollection that "the heathen" did not like to shake hands.

"You must excuse me if I cannot quite get your name, Mr. Sammyter," he said, with a lightsome glee he was very far from feeling, and with a shout which arose from the ingrained belief of most English-speaking people that all "foreigners" are deaf.

"Can he talk English?" he asked Paulina, scarcely making even a pretence of lowering his tone.

The softest and most insinuating of voices replied with hardly the trace of an accent: "I speak English, but imperfectly," while Paulina blushed for Percy's gaucheries of manner and brutal western ways.

Then Percy sat him down in the big carved chair, determined to be as conventional as possible.

"I had a very odd dream about you last Friday night, Paulina," he began at once, with the idea of showing this Hindu that he didn't regard him as anything wonderful at all. A glance passed between Paulina and the Eastern gentleman, which set Percy's blood afire. But with an effort he strangled his desire to punch the turbaned head, and continued: "Yes, it was very vivid. I saw you in your yellow frock, with the snake trimming."

Paulina smiled her inscrutable smile,



Drawn by F. O. Small.

" ' I SPEAK ENGLISH, BUT IMPERFECTLY. ' "

with white lids down-dropt over mystical eyes.

"Yes," she said, "I know. I visited you in my astral."

"What!" said Percy, explosively. "And has your yellow frock an astral body, too?"

"To be sure it has. He does not comprehend these things—" apologetically to the Brahman. "And did you read what I wrote, Percy?"

"Wrote?" said Percy, who hardly knew whether he was on his head or his heels. "A dream write? How could you write when you were only a something in my dream?"

"Did you not ask me a question?" said Paulina. "And did I not go to your desk and write the answer, and did you not find it there next day?"

"I did not look for it," said Percy sullenly, not to be deluded by these sorceries.

Yet, what could it mean? The Brahman and Paulina once more exchanged such a glance as beings of some superior sphere might use to express their pity and com-

passion toward some worm which grovelled in the dust beneath them, unwitting of anything higher.

"This is nonsense, Paulina," said Percy, striving to keep hold of his self-possession and common-sense.

"It was natural that I should dream about you when my thoughts were full of you. It was the evening after I had called here—you remember?" He strove, on

his part, to establish a secret understanding with her by a significant glance. But even as he did so, he knew it to be a vain and desperate expedient. Her eyes were already talking over his head with the Brahman's.

Then Paulina said coldly: "Then how could I know that I

appeared to you, and how could I know that you had asked me a question, and that I had written the answer at your desk, unless I really did visit you in my astral, and unless I have a clear recollection of all that passed between us?"

How could she, indeed? Percy sat there stupidly, and wondered and raged. He heard strange, beautiful doctrines such as he had never dreamed of before. Pictures of the peace of the soul in the state called Devachan,—terrible suggestions of the suicide or the murdered roaming in pain in Kama-Loka, and yearning for the earth-life they had left, seemed to rise, he knew not whence, and there unrolled before him, he knew not how, vast visions of the has been and the shall be. Yet, for the most part, these two mysterious ones sat silent. To Percy it seemed that they had no need of words. He was just feeling that he could bear no more of this damnable magic, and contemplating a wild rush for sanity, from this disturbing, delusive atmosphere, when Mrs. DeBurgh Smith, in all her bright worldliness of aspect, ap-

peared within the doorway with a charming and apologetic smile.

"Dear Mr. Yajma"—the rest was a confused murmur. "Excuse me for interrupting you, but will you be so very kind as to come down with me? There are some very nice people here who are most anxious to meet you, and I have promised them the privilege. Paulina will be down after a bit. Don't hurry, my dear. Perhaps Percy will not care to come down just yet. And, my dear girl,"—here Mrs. DeBurgh Smith approached her daughter's ear,—"*perhaps you had better put on that lovely Worth gown with the short, puffed sleeves, before you come down.*" Mrs. DeBurgh Smith could never quite grow used to the Oriental garb. To her eye there was something *dishabillé*—not to say, improper, about it, although she nightly swallowed *décolleté* gowns, with tie-backs, without a murmur.

When they were alone, Paulina turned to Percy, still sitting stupidly there, with a look of ecstasy on her face.

"Isn't he perfect?" she asked fervently.

"Who? The fakir—the juggler?" said Percy.

He had his immediate punishment in the curl of her delicate lip.

"There was never," she said, with cruel clearness of accent, "a finer specimen of a man, a gentleman, and a philosopher. It makes me purer and better only to look at him. How glad I am that we have been so favored! Even should he leave us to-night, the exquisite aroma of his presence would remain to bless the spot."

Percy rose, with an exclamation of disgust. The two stood looking each other straight in the eyes, and the thought in the mind of each was: "What a deluded fool!"

But the woman divined first, and spoke first.

"Yes," she said, "you think that, because you know so little!"

"Yes," he said, following with his slower speech, "I understand your thought, even though I'm not a Mahatma, or a black magician. You think me a fool, but I am more sane than you are!"

Paulina gave a little sneer.

"That you can mention a Mahatma and a black magician in the same breath shows once again the depth of your ignorance," she said. "The Elder Brothers,

or Mahatmas, belong to the White Brotherhood of Initiates and work only for the good of the race."

"And is this heathen Chinese your own especial Guru?" enquired Percy, with a harsher sneer than hers, unwarned by the flashing of her eye.

Paulina smiled icily.

"The Masters do not manifest themselves so readily to beings like you and me! Yet this is undoubtedly one who knows—but there," she added wearily, "there is no use asking me anything of this sort, Percy. Your plane of consciousness is as yet so very low that you could not even comprehend the simplest occult fact."

"Then why do you even condescend to speak to me?" he blurted out in hot anger. "Why do you deign to allow so abject a worm to enter your holy of holies? Oh, Paulina,"—he softened his voice to a heart-broken whisper,—"*why have you played with me so? Why have your eyes said that you loved me, if you really do not? What is this dreadful reason, why you will not marry me?*"

For a moment there was silence, and afar off it seemed to him that he heard her say again, as she had said in his dream: "I have always loved you, and I love you now!"

But Paulina had not spoken, and her lips were firmly closed. Only the chameleon leaped about her throat and mocked him.

"Very well," he said, and turned away. "I shall leave you to your worship of this wonderful Hindu. But God will punish you for breaking a man's true heart!"

Paulina's proud lip quivered, and before he could cross the threshold, like a flash of white light, she was beside him, so close that he could hear the beating of her heart. "Percy," she said, and there were tears in her voice, although her eyes were bright.

"Go home; but do me one favor. Look among your papers and read the words I wrote when I visited you in my astral. Then, perhaps, you will believe. When you have visible proof, Percy, then, perhaps, you will believe—and understand!"

Percy said nothing, but with a lingering look into her eyes he turned away.

Paulina saw him no more until long after the excitement of the Brahman's

visit had simmered down, appearing only now in the daily papers in spasmodic and humorous details concerning his manner of eating, his weight, his costumes, and other interesting peculiarities.

During this interval, Mr. Herbert Percy Byron revived a little, and found that hope had not entirely deserted him. To use one of his own descriptive phrases, he "did some tall thinking" about this time, and decided upon an entirely new course of action. He had laid all his plans with the utmost nicety, when one bright spring morning, he saw her sitting in Lafayette square, drawing cabalistic symbols with the point of her fluffy parasol, and plunged in the deepest sort of meditation.

The freshness of the sweet air, the gladness of the common daylight, and her strictly conventional garb gave him a wholesome sense of manliness and mastery which he had never been able to feel in the elusive atmosphere of her singular little apartment. So he promptly made her aware of his presence, speaking with a bright serenity that astonished her.

"Paulina," he said, seating himself beside her on the sun-dappled bench, "I want you to tell me once more that story of your childhood, when you remembered for the first time your past incarnation."

She stole a glance under her dark lashes. He was looking into her face with earnest attention. Evidently he meant it seriously.

"Oh," she said, with an embarrassment which sat strangely on her. "That is so old a story. Everybody has heard that. Don't make me repeat it."

Somehow she seemed to have lost her lofty, inscrutable air, and her eyes looked less mystical seen thus in the clear sunlight. His heart yearned over her, as she sat there in her trim gingham gown, and looked up at him from under the brim of her flowery spring hat. She was infinitely sweeter thus, he thought, than with all those reptiles and symbols about her. Never had he realized before how young she was.

"Do you really want to hear it, Percy?"

"I really want to hear it," he made answer gravely. "I have a particular reason for wanting to hear it."

So Paulina repeated the story, rather as a something learned by rote. To herself

it seemed that the life and the wonder had gone out of it. As he grew more interested, her own language seemed to her to grow tamer. But when she reached the point at which she spoke of the bridge and the boy, he stopped her with up-lifted hand.

"Now, Paulina," he said, with what seemed to her a very strained and affected manner of speech, "Pause! I have a revelation to make to you." And then in the most impressive and deliberate manner of which he was capable, he uttered these remarkable words: "I was that boy!"

Paulina almost shrieked. Then a dewy sort of smile stole into her eyes.

"Ah," she said, "you found my paper. You learned the truth. You have applied yourself to higher studies, and already one link of the past is visible to you!" To herself she was saying: he has set his foot on the ladder of mystic sounds! He has heard the first,—like the nightingale's parting song to his mate!

It was Percy's turn to be slightly embarrassed. But he had prepared himself too well for this to last long.

"No," he said. "To tell you the truth, Paulina, I did not find your paper. But I have no doubt about it at all. My man says he tidied my desk that Saturday morning, and threw away some papers with only a few words scratched on them. I scolded him well, Paulina, but he really did not mean any harm, and thought them worthless."

Paulina grasped his arm. She was quite pale now.

"Yet you know what my words were?"

"Not exactly," Percy admitted reluctantly. "But no doubt that, too, will come."

"Then how did you remember your past incarnation, Percy? Through what evidence did it come?"

"Ah, Paulina," Percy said, raising his fine brown eyes heavenward, and conscious that now was his chance to put in his fine work. "How do any of these things come? They who know, know, and they who don't know,—don't know! And that is all there is to it. Evidence? I don't want evidence! Only the blinded materialist demands evidence. Is not intuition far superior to reason?"

He was rather overdoing the business,

and fancied that Paulina looked suspicious. But, like all students of occultism, she had the credulity of a child, and she was really rejoicing, and sending a psychic message to the Great Ones who need no message.

"He has even heard the second sound—the sound like the silver cymbal of the Dhyanis awakening the twinkling stars!"

Then she turned upon him with her face aglow.

"Oh—ah—by the way, Paulina,—I say," Percy added, in somewhat shamefaced fashion, "I remember all that Nile business, too, and that fellow—ah—what's his name?—Horus! He had a hawk's head, didn't he? And sat on a lily leaf, and said 'sh-h-h'!" Here Percy laid his finger on his nineteenth century lip in a vain effort to suggest the attitude of the god of silence. Evidently he had been studying hard.

Paulina sat spell-bound. The great truths were there, though rudely presented. How had he learned all this, in so brief an interval, if not through communications from the Great Ones? She plainly perceived an aura of strength and wisdom about him, unseen before.

"Percy," she said, "then it is impossible that you do not know my reason for not marrying you! If you can go back to Horus,—long before the first dynasty,—surely you must know—"

"What?" said Percy, in a masterful voice.

"That—you—were—"

"What was I?" said Percy.

"My—my—grandfather in the second dynasty!"

It was out at last. Herbert Percy was conscious of a dreadful convulsion within his breast. He had been prepared, he thought, for anything, but, surely not for anything so superlatively side-split-

ting as this! His inmost soul gave a gigantic horse-laugh.

But it was not for nothing that he had arrayed the whole forces of his nature against the wild illusion which threatened to tear his loved one's heart from his. She heard him clear his throat with vigor. That was all.

"Why, of course, I knew *that*," he answered in a placid voice. "Of course, I remembered that. What then?"

"Why, Percy, can't you see—" Paulina grew more blushing and confused with every word. "You can't marry your own granddaughter! Besides—"

Percy possessed himself of a white chamois glove with a hand in it. There was no one but the trees to see. "What! Is there more yet? Tell me at once, Paulina," he said, in a voice which sent cold shivers down her spine. "Tell me at once what words your astral wrote at my desk. You cannot deceive me now. Quick! or I shall tell you!"

"To me time exists no longer. I see the past as the future, and both are one. You were my grandfather.

In time to come I shall re-incarnate as your grandmother. A man may not marry his grandmother!"

In vain she strove to regain her Delphic impressiveness of tone. Deprived of her mystery-suggesting accessories, she was shorn of half her powers, and maidenly timidity laid its weakening grasp upon her.

Percy laid the light hand back on Paulina's knee, and withdrew himself with a concentrated glare of scorn.

"Is that your wonderful 'reason'? Shame upon you! Shame upon you! Degenerate Chela!" he said, loftily. "So much vouchsafed you, and so little learned! Is it possible, Paulina," he added, in a milder voice, once more seating himself beside her. "Is it possible



Drawn by
F. O. Small.

"MY MAN SAYS HE TIDIED MY DESK."

that you are still so entangled in the gross conditions of this brief and evanescent incarnation, that you can for one moment imagine that petty human relations can endure? What matter if æons back you loved me as your grandfather? What if in Egypt you gave to me the warmest sis-

He paused, for he fancied the Princess Paulina was crying behind her parasol. When she next revealed her face to him, it had a look of perplexed humility and dawning wonder.

How had he already gone so far beyond her? How clearly he saw! How logically he reasoned!

He pursued his advantage hotly.

"I am disappointed in you, Paulina! I am surprised to find you still so conventional at heart! 'A man may not marry his grandmother,' indeed! How is it that you, for whom time exists no more, should regard mere human and temporary limitations like that? Who made such a law anyhow, but man? Why should the laws of ignorant men bind the students of the Wisdom Religion? What would your Guru say? What does he say, knowing that you would try to stop with your weak hands the revolutions of the mighty Karmic wheel. Ah, you who thought yourself

so far advanced upon the path, how little you really know!"

A faint voice came from behind the parasol.

"Then, I suppose you do not care to marry me now!"

With a great effort Percy controlled the leaping of his heart. He leaned forward and looked into her eyes.

"It is Karma," he said, softly, and his voice was as the Voice of the Silence:

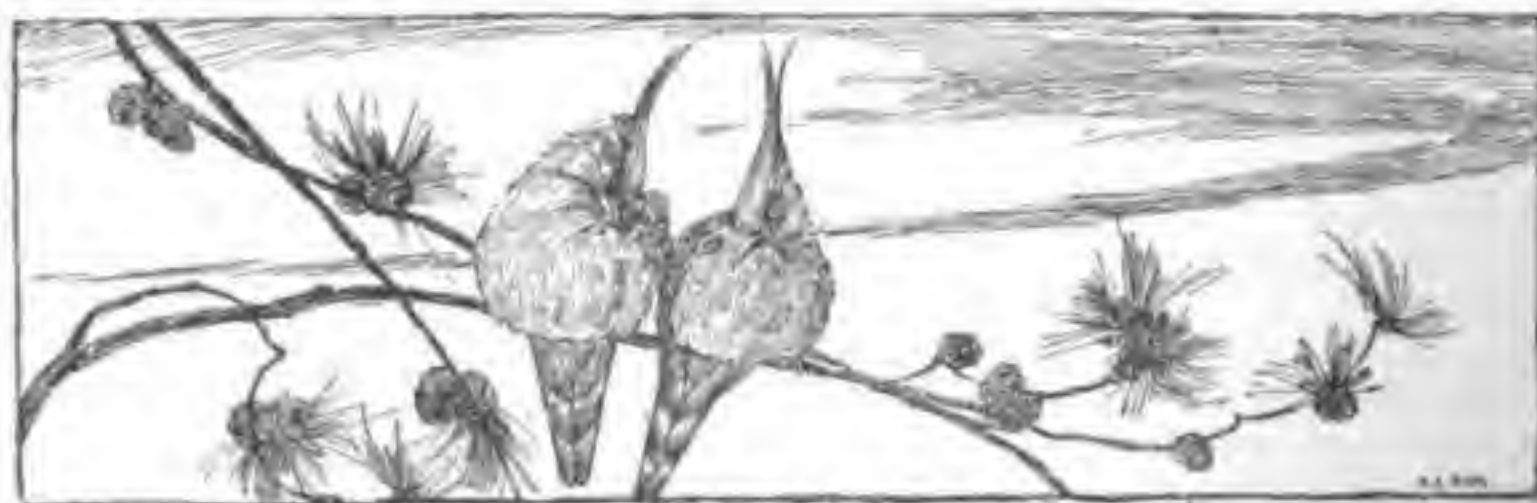
"It is Karma!"



Drawn by F. O. Small.

"IT IS KARMA!"

terly affection? What if, some Manvantaras hence, on the planet Mars, perhaps, you hold me to your heart with grandmotherly devotion? Linked by the absolute decree of Karma, we have re-incarnated in this present era unbound by any ties of human relationship. What does that mean? I cannot be your grandfather nor your brother. You are not yet capable of being my grandmother. What can this mean, but that you must be my—"



THE NIXY'S CHORD.

BY HJALMAR HJORTH BOVESEN.

I.

DAGFINN was sixteen years old when the story was told to him of the Nixy's chord. Night after night he went to the cataract and sat listening until a strange rhythm seemed to steal into the rush of the water. And the longer he listened, the surer he felt that there was a melody, too,—a wondrously sweet and alluring melody. And did he really, through the white veil of water, see the Nixy sit vaguely fingering the strings? He thought surely that he saw him. But the people said that he who learned the Nixy's seventh chord would have to give his own soul in exchange. Unless some one cut the strings of his fiddle, he would play himself straight into eternal perdition.

Night after night Dagfinn lay awake pondering this awful problem; and the thought kept haunting him what the Nixy's chords were like. The most tantalizingly alluring melodies began

to run in his brain, and gave him no peace until in some way he could fetter and hold them fast. He knew where his father's fiddle hung. It simply harried his mind,—tore it up and mangled it,—



Drawn by Osterlind.

"SHIVERINGLY HE PULLED THE BLANKET ABOUT HIM."

this knowledge that the fiddle hung upon the topmost hook in the fur closet in the loft. The vision of it hanging there, with all its wonderful melodies hushed and dumb, like brilliant butterflies curled up in their chrysalis, tormented and drew him with an irresistible force. There was no help for it; he had to go up into the loft.

In the next bed, his brother, Halvar, was sleeping like a stone. Shiveringly he pulled the blanket about him, flung it, toga-fashion, over his shoulder, and stole on tiptoe up the stairs, which creaked abominably. The summer twilight was thronged with hideous phantoms and goblins, which stretched out shadowy hands to grab him, and he shuddered with fear in his innermost marrow. But that fiddle—that fiddle! It shone and sparkled with a meteoric refulgence. It attracted him like a magnet, and all the specters that peopled the dark could not deter him. Now, they made awful faces, stretched out their tongues, and put their fingers to their noses! No matter! The fiddle was there, and he had got it. He sat down on a large wolf-skin coat which smelled strongly of camphor, and began experimentally to thrum on the strings. Delicious shudders ran through him. He tried the screws, which stuck fast, and strained the bass string, which hung slack until it made some sort of concord with the rest. But when he got hold of the bow, and tried to pick out the latest tune that possessed him, he made discords that excoriated his ears. It was terribly sad: not a single harmonious chord could he produce. He had to take to thrumming again. The tone intervals between the strings he soon caught, and then he managed to hint, as it were, at the cadence of the strain, and that gave him infinite delight.

He had taken care to close and bolt the door, so as to make sure that no one heard him. And thus he sat until the dawn began to flush the eastern horizon. Then he crawled down to bed again, stiff in every joint and shivering with cold. But the next night and the next he repeated the experiment, and remained undetected.

But, of course, this could not continue. He must learn music, cost whatever it might. There was Anders Volden, the

schoolmaster in the cottage down by the river. He had a violin, and played all sorts of reels, and hallings, and spring dances at weddings and funerals. He could not play like Germund Jonsrud, to be sure; it was plain that he had never tried to catch the Nixy's chords. But still, he might teach Dagfinn what he knew, and he would himself coax the Nixy, as his father had done, to entrust to him the deeper mysteries. Full of bravado, but all tremulous within, Dagfinn sought the old man, and developed an astonishing eloquence in his endeavors to persuade him. It was the question of secrecy which troubled Anders; but it was upon this very thing that the whole plot hinged. And in the end the boy's ingenuity prevailed. Anders promised to give him secret lessons, and it was amazing what rapid progress he made. Within six months he could play better than his master.

II.

The parson had a daughter named Dorothy, a slim, will-o'-the-wisp of a thing, but terribly enterprising. Dagfinn met her for the first time when they both were being prepared for confirmation. He had admired her, to be sure, at a distance, from her pinafore period, when she sat in her father's pew in church, with a blue velvet hood on her head, which kept bobbing up and down during the entire service, and occasionally received a disciplinary shake from the lady at her side. It was a fact which Dagfinn had heard his mother comment upon, that the parson's daughter, who ought to be an example to other children, behaved disgracefully in church. But, as he was not without sympathy with her misbehavior, he took to watching the blue hood, and it was astonishing how much shorter the sermon seemed after he had discovered this diversion. "Such a whimsy-slimsy thing," said his mother, who incidentally suspected his admiration, and was determined to discourage it, "a good north wind could blow her away."

Dagfinn expressed the hope, or would have expressed it if he had dared, that in that case she would not venture out in windy weather. For all that, it was to a storm that he was finally indebted for her

acquaintance. It was in a February thaw, with a howling northwester and gusty showers mingled with sleet which stung your face like a whip-lash. He was trudging along with his sturdy, tarred top-boots, splashing delightedly into every puddle, when he became aware of Dorothy's frail figure arrayed in a waterproof, with a wrecked umbrella in one hand, and with the other gathering her flapping draperies about her ankles. She was standing on an insulated stone at the roadside, surrounded by a sea of snowy slush, under which there was a substratum of gnarled, bluish ice. He saw her dilemma in an instant, and being unused to polite palaver, he only lifted his cap, and then put both his arms about her and carried her in safety to the stone steps of the building where her father instructed the candidates for confirmation. She fought like an angry cat, called him a horrid boy, and finally pitched his cap into a puddle. But he trudged along imperturbably, paying no attention to her capers, and deposited her safely in the vestibule. There, instead of thanking him, she stared at him in angry defiance, smoothed half absent-mindedly her rumpled feathers, and then with alarming suddenness burst into tears. He stared back and cursed his awkwardness, being under the impression that in some way he had hurt her. As, however, he was powerless to comfort her, he walked away without a word, but with a desperate sense of wretchedness.

He saw her often enough after that, but she appeared not to see him. There was in her air a sort of missy scorn of all things masculine, and he felt crushed under the weight of her contempt. It may have been the utter sense of unworthiness induced by her treatment of him, rather than her father's homilies, which caused a temporary religious awakening in him. He became pious, prayed morning and night, and paved his whole future with good resolutions. He regarded the fiddle as sinful, and paid no more nocturnal visits to the closet in the loft.

And thus the time passed gloomily until the day of confirmation arrived. Then she, too, was emotionally aroused. The solemnity of the occasion appealed to her, and she prayed for strength to forgive her

enemies, and those whom she had despitefully used. And the one who primarily benefited by this resolve was Dagfinn. Scarcely could he trust his own eyes, when he saw her walk up the aisle at the head of the procession of girls. She was no longer the "whimsy-slimsy thing." She seemed to have undergone some miraculous transformation over night: her bust was beautifully rounded, her angular shoulders and sharp elbows had become grace itself, and her expression had a certain, still, radiant sweetness which was intoxicating. She wore the black silk dress in which her mother had been confirmed twenty-two years ago, and a beautiful lace collar which had belonged to her grandmother. The quaint old-fashion of these garments imparted to her an air of something so touchingly virginal,—so primly and sweetly maidenly,—that Dagfinn felt tears in his eyes whenever he looked at her.

He was standing with his father and mother out in the churchyard, waiting for the horses, when the pastor and his family approached them. The clergyman was in full canonicals, and his wife looked conscious of her dignity in her artless finery, which served, however, its purpose in emphasizing her gentility and distinguishing her from the simple peasantry. It was no unusual thing for the pastor to stop and shake hands with a parishioner and congratulate him on his son who had passed a creditable examination,* and neither Germund nor his wife found it at all remarkable; nor were they astonished when Dorothy stepped up to Dagfinn and offered him her hand, fixing upon him a pair of deep, candid eyes. But Dagfinn himself was overwhelmed, dumbfounded. The landscape swam before him in a luminous haze, and Dorothy's beautiful eyes, with their wonderfully soft and dewy expression, made him dizzy with delight.

"I hope you will forgive me, Dagfinn," she said with a gentle half-smile, "for behaving so badly to you when you carried me across the yard in that awful storm. I ought to have thanked you; in place of that, I really believe I came near scratching your eyes out."

"Oh, that was nothing to speak about,"

* It is the custom in Norway to catechize the candidates for confirmation in the presence of the congregation, before admitting them to the first sacrament.



*Drawn by
Osterlind*

"HE BECAME AWARE OF DOROTHY'S FRAIL FIGURE."

retorted Dagfinn, blushing to the edge of his hair with embarrassment.

"But I shall yet feel better for having spoken about it," she retorted sweetly. "Good-by."

She offered him her hand once more, and he held it for a moment in his own. It was such a soft, slender hand, so won-

drously delicate, and yet its touch gave him a slight shock, whereupon a warm current of blood seemed to diffuse itself through every part of his body, enwrapping him in a strange, blissful glow.

The next time he met Dorothy was in the kitchen of the parsonage. It was but a few days after the confirmation, and his mother had sent him with a large keg of butter, a couple of prime cheeses, and a pair of geese as an offering to the parson. As it was Dorothy's week to keep house, it became her duty to receive these gifts and to thank for them. And how ravishing she looked in her simple calico dress, with a white apron pinned to her bust, and the air of busy domesticity with which she tested the butter and cheese, praised their excellence, and gave orders for their bestowal in the proper enclosures in the cellar. Then a large trap-door was opened in the kitchen floor, and she descended with a lantern, followed by Dagfinn,

who volunteered to carry the heavy kegs. From the great bunch of keys that depended from her waist she selected one and opened a closet in which he deposited his burden. Then she showed him the potato bin, from which long, white shoots were crawling up to the thick, dusty window-pane of bottle-greenish

glass. The cabbage and the turnips he had to inspect, too, and the hyacinth bulbs and dahlia roots that hung in long rows under the rafters. The insects had destroyed a number of them, and she asked his opinion as to how many he thought might yet be alive. She had the greatest difficulty in finding any servant who understood how to plant a flower-bed. She had marked the color of the flower on a slip attached to each root and bulb, but either they could not read, or they wilfully ignored her instructions.

The lantern which she held on a level with her eyes, spread a vague circle of light about her head, and her fresh, girlish face seemed to start out of the dusk like a wondrous flower out of the black earth. She was so wholly free from embarrassment that Dagfinn, who had at first been somewhat constrained, began to feel a contagion of her happy candor. The situation was so unusual. He and she alone in this cool, damp, subterranean cell, talking about potatoes and cabbages, and hyacinths and dahlias. There were other things which he would have much preferred to talk with her about, but he could never devise a way of introducing them. He had a sudden burning desire to confide to her his secret ambition to learn the Nixy's chords. What would she say of that? He yearned to know how it would strike a mind like hers. But in his innermost heart he felt a sting—an aching pang, at the thought of the distance which separated him from her. How would she receive such a confidence from him? He could imagine the look of haughty surprise with which she would chill him. But before he had time to lose courage, he had an inspiration. The flowers would give him a chance to continue the acquaintance. He would offer his assistance in laying out her flower-beds. And when, with girlish eagerness, she accepted his offer, he could have shouted with joy. In no wise was he disturbed by the calm, clear common-sense of her speech, or the cool equanimity with which she gave him her hand at parting. He had never hoped that his presence, even in subterranean privacy, would affect her as her presence affected him. If she would only tolerate him, he would be content. If she would allow him to serve her, he would swim in beatitude.

III.

What a civilizer, in the most beautiful sense, a girl can be to a boy! What a world of new impressions the mere sight of her arouses! What undreamed of things begin to stir in the depths of his being at the dawning consciousness of sex! Dorothy was yet at the stage when she was intensely feminine rather than womanly. There was a great deal of the spoiled child about her, and a certain sovereign caprice not unmingled with superciliousness. Boys were absurd and ridiculous creatures whom she consented to notice out of pity for their awkwardness and stupidity. Girls, she declared, were so very much cleverer and altogether more sensible and rational. There were a hundred things about Dagfinn which provoked her mirth—things which to him were, and remained, utterly mysterious. But then there were moments again when she repented of her ruthlessness, when her conscience troubled her, and she resolved to be good, and gentle, and patient. At such times she showered kindness upon Dagfinn. She even condescended to criticize his appearance, in a disinterested spirit; informed him that his way of wearing his hair was "horribly rural," and advised him how to cut it in a more enlightened way. But when, following her advice, he presented himself with the "enlightened" hair-cut, she clapped her hands and laughed until the tears ran down her cheeks. Then he swore that he would have nothing more to do with her and her flowers. But in spite of all resolutions he went as usual, worked like a trooper, and basked in her smiles of approval. But confide in her, he could not: she was yet too far above him. He feared her laughter, her astonishment; he adored her, but it was as a creature made of finer clay. The sense of privilege which she was not loathe to keep alive in him prevented them from meeting on terms of equality and comradeship as boy and girl.

For a while this situation remained unchanged. Then, in the first week of April, a great thaw came, the river rose rapidly, and the parson and his family had to move out of their homestead for fear of being carried away by the flood. Dagfinn induced his father and mother to

invite them to Jonsrud. Germund did not like the idea, at first; but his wife persuaded him that the dignity of the family demanded it. That if the parson did not come to Jonsrud, he would have to go to Steen or Birkevold; and that was not to be thought of. Accordingly, horses and karyols were despatched to the parsonage, and Dorothy and her parents were installed under the same roof as Dagfinn.

IV.

The flood subsided slowly in the course of a week; but three months elapsed before the parsonage became habitable. The walls and the ceilings were ruined; the foundations of the house were knocked awry and loosened, and the woodwork was so soaked with water that it seemed as if it would never dry. These three months were the happiest period in Dagfinn's life. To watch Dorothy's dainty manners across the table,—the way she held her knife and fork, the exquisite curl of her ear, and the little supercilious feature about her mouth, which was slightly emphasized by the straight, fine, high-bred nose. There was in the expression of the whole demure little face (though I fancy he did not detect it) something of the self-conscious wisdom of seventeen. What he did see, however, or I should say feel, and that very acutely, was the definiteness of her young personality. Like the planets, she carried her own atmosphere with her wherever she went. Since her birth, she had been accepted unquestioningly for what she was, and had rarely been found fault with. No wonder she held herself to be a person of consequence. Under her demure mask, however, there was usually a half-suppressed ripple of laughter,—young, thoughtless, foolish laughter,—which to him was highly contagious. There was a sort of secret freemasonry between them, and she knew she could appeal to his sympathy when (as often happened) she was shaking with internal mirth. Only once did she come perilously near offending him by this readiness to see ridiculous things, which to others were invisible. She was seized at the dinner-table with one of her unaccountable attacks of risibility, and finally excused

herself and left the room. In five minutes she returned, blushing and resolutely grave. It then dawned upon Dagfinn that it was his father she had been laughing at, and he suddenly felt his ears burn, though with embarrassment rather than indignation. The pastor's wife had, by accident, dropped her spoon upon the floor, whereupon Germund, with peasant straightforwardness, had offered her the one he had himself been using.

They were daily together, were constantly roaming over the fields, rowing on the river, catching perch and trout, and setting salmon traps under the cataract. But still, in spite of their happy comradeship, he could never quite screw up his courage to confide to her his musical secret. Never once had his father touched the fiddle since the pastor and family came to Jonsrud, and when his restless moods came over him, he only worked with a more furious energy. Strange to say, the presence of Dorothy had exactly the opposite effect upon his son. He was constantly possessed with a musical fervor. He was aching to tell Dorothy about the Nixy's strain; but, whenever the confession trembled upon his lips, the dread of her risibility would come over him, and he would remain silent; for he felt that if she laughed at that, he would find it hard to forgive her; and she was so very precious to him. He could not afford to risk his relation to her on any stake, even the highest. And so week went after week, and he had said nothing.

It was an evening early in June, when Dorothy had been simply adorable. Dagfinn had said good-night to her at the foot of the stairs, and had retired to his room. But just as he had undressed, a wonderfully alluring strain began to hum in his brain, repeating itself with the tenderest modulations, then swimming in a melodious haze, from which, again, the clear, enchanting tune would start forth, and rock, and dance, and warble with delirious caprices. It was of no use that he turned over on his left side and on his right, repeated the multiplication table, thought of a waving field of wheat, and all other devices for inducing sleep that he had ever heard of. The melody would not be banished. He was so wide awake that it seemed as if he never could sleep again.



*Drawn by
Osterlind.*

"HE DEPOSITED HER SAFELY IN THE VESTIBULE."

Having wrestled for hours with his importunate fancies, he rose, wrapped the blanket about him and mounted the stairs to the fur closet in the loft. Then he pulled down the old wolf-skin coat (which would muffle the sound), sat down upon it, and began to tune the fiddle. What wonderful ring there was in it, to be sure. He thrummed vaguely and warily on the strings, and there was a joy in each chord which resounded from the deepest chambers of his heart. No, there was no help for it; he must try that with the bow. It was too intoxicatingly beautiful. And up went the fiddle to his chin, and the bow swept lightly—cautiously—over the strings, and the hushed melody filled the narrow space. But strain followed upon strain—one more enrapturing than the other. Dagfinn forgot all except the ecstasy of being able to produce such music. Swifter and swifter flew the bow, louder and more wantonly alluring the melodies whirled out into the still night. He shut his eyes, threw back his head, and played himself into a blissful frenzy, during which his blood seemed to surge to the rhythm of his strain. His heart beat to it, and strange, elfin voices called to him from afar, now indistinctly, now again clearly and brightly, and with an inconceivable sweetness of tone. And through the whirling haze that encircled him he caught glimpses of Dorothy's lovely face, now with her teasing smile, now with her "missy" scorn, and now again with a noble seriousness, and eyes full of dim, tender yearning. With each fresh glimpse there stole a new note into his play. He felt it so acutely: something challenged him to express it. It seemed like a new experience.

So absorbed was he in his improvisation, that he did not hear the slight creak of an opening door, nor did he see an alarmed face, framed in a wealth of blonde, disheveled hair, that was thrust in through the opening. The moon was sailing across the sky, sending a soft flood of light through the dusty window-pane. Some big, blue bottle-flies were aroused from their sleep and began to buzz boozily on the sill. A mouse scampered across the floor and ran over Dorothy's foot; but she did not heed it. Presently, steps were heard on the stairs, and she gave a little scream and evapo-

rated. He dropped the fiddle, and fancied he saw a white, willowy figure slip out and vanish in the dusk; but he was not sure. Had he not seen her with his eyes shut? Was it not his fancy that had conjured her out of the moonlight? But another thing he was very sure of, and that was that it was his father's steps he heard in the loft. It would be useless deception to hang up the fiddle, and he therefore remained immovable, hugging it to his breast. There is no denying that he was internally quaking; all the camphorated overcoats on the wall began to move in a ring, and there was a heavy oppression in the air. The steps paused for an instant, then the door was thrust open, and the big frame of Germund almost filled the narrow room.

"My son," he said, with an ominous gentleness, "is this the way you obey me?"

Dagfinn shivered, but made no answer.

"In God's name, Dagfinn, where did you learn to play like that?" Germund went on with anxious solemnity.

"Oh, I don't know. It just came to me," stammered the boy, not wishing to betray his friend the schoolmaster.

The reply disarmed his father. He stood mournfully silent for some minutes, as if he were pondering. He leaned up against the wall, and Dagfinn marveled to see how mild and noble his features looked in the moonlight.

"Poor boy," he sighed, as if talking to himself, "poor boy! He could not help it. It was in him, and it had to come out."

"Play that piece for me again, my son," he continued, with that sense of relief which there is in giving up a struggle. The imprisoned sentiments which for years he had guarded clamored for escape, and the door was already ajar. It was only a question of time when their captivity would be at an end. Dagfinn looked up incredulously, not daring to trust his ears. "Play it again, as nearly as you can," his father repeated with eager urgency.

Dagfinn lifted the violin to his chin and began to play. It was not the same that he had played, for he found it impossible to play twice alike. His father's presence affected him at first with a vague constraint, and the old freedom and boldness were wanting. But, as he began to



Drawn by Oates Lind.

"HE SAW HER WALK UP THE AISLE AT THE HEAD OF THE PROCESSION OF GIRLS."

feel the sympathetic intelligence of his listener, his touch grew warmer and surer, and the play of fancy more brilliant and daringly original. At the end of an hour, when the colors of the dawn began to burn on the eastern horizon, Germund seized his son's hand and said:

"You have done well. You are indeed your father's son."

There was something almost wounding to the young man in the moderation of such praise. He had expected much more.

"But, father," he cried imploringly, "tell me this: Shall I ever be great—as great as you?"

Germund knitted his brows and fastened a searchingly serious gaze upon his son.

"Nay, thank your God," he said, with a deep, quivering earnestness, "that one thing is wanting you, and may you never know what it is."

"I know it," said Dagfinn, in a wild, intense whisper, "it is the Nixy's strain."

The old man tumbled against the wall, as if he had been struck. His face was ashy gray, his lips trembled, his breath came in agonized gasps. "My God," he groaned, "it was all—in—vain—all in vain."

V.

Dagfinn slept late after his nocturnal encounter with his father, and Dorothy did not make her appearance for breakfast. At the midday dinner she was distraught and serious, and eschewed everybody's eyes. The pastor made a few feeble jokes in the hope of arousing her risibility, but she smiled only faintly and with visible effort. All day long she tormented Dagfinn by appearing oblivious of his presence, or openly avoiding him. Once, when by chance their glances met, the color flared out upon her cheeks, and in a flash the conviction came to him that it was not her wraith but her actual self he had seen in the night. There was something so sweetly virginal in her embarrassment, and it affected him with a vaguely joyous oppression of pain and unrest. But when he presumed upon the new relation between them to seek her, taking boldly the initiative, she grew scornful again, or studiously indifferent, and finally took refuge in a sober, impenetrable domesticity, going into the pantry to help his mother to weigh out the weekly allotments of flour, coffee, and sugar.

Thus three days were spent in futile fencing and playing at hide and seek; but on the fourth day, which was Friday, she begged him, with something of her old, frank comradeship, to row her down to the parsonage, where she wished to give some directions to the workmen. But when they got into the boat she grew pensive and serious, blushed at the least provocation, and seemed ill at ease. There was in her glance, when she looked at him, a shy interest which now and again deepened into admiration. She was at great pains to recover her old tone of friendly

condescension, but with poor success. They spent an hour at the parsonage, where a hundred practical concerns absorbed her attention, and it was late in the afternoon when they were again on their way up the river. He took off his coat and rowed with long, vigorous strokes, and she sat in the stern of the boat letting her hand glide through the water. There was a wondrous, sweet, summer stillness about them; the forest and the green fields were clearly reflected in the placid water. Now and then a trout leaped for a fly, and a series of widening rings gliding over the surface marked the spot where it had risen. Dagfinn rested on his oars and let the boat drift. He looked at Dorothy, and a calm contentment and confidence came over him, which he had never known before. She returned his glance with a warm, honest directness, which was beautiful.

"Dorothy," he began, "do you believe in the Nixy?"

"When I hear you play, I can believe in anything," she answered, simply.

"Then it was you I saw in the loft three nights ago."

"Yes, it was I. Sleep was out of the question. I heard the most wonderful hushed music, and I could not resist finding out where it came from. At first I was afraid. I thought of trolls, and nixies, and all sorts of strange creatures. But what I saw was stranger than anything I could have imagined."

"How do you mean?"

"Why, Dagfinn, you are a great genius. No one but a genius could play like that."

There was something so overwhelming to him in praise from such a source, that Dagfinn felt the tears burn under his eyelids.

"Oh, no," he said, half deprecatingly, "I lack one thing."

"And what is that?—Training?"

"No, I lack the Nixy's chords."

"You don't mean that."

"Yes," he asserted solemnly. "I mean it. Don't you know about father?"

"No. What about him?"

"They say he has caught the Nixy's chords."

"It isn't possible. There is no Nixy."

"Do you think so? But how then could father learn the strain? They say there are seven chords in the Nixy strain."

I am going to try to learn the first three or four ; but not the seventh."

"Why not the seventh?"

"Because you have to give your soul in exchange."

"Your soul in exchange! To whom?"

"To the devil."

"Oh, no; that is a nursery tale. What has the Nixy to do with the devil?"

"He is a pagan creature, and you know they say the reason why the Nixy's play is so wonderfully wild and sad is that he knows he can have no part in the salvation of Christ."

"Who told you that?"

"Old Guri, the pauper."

"How does she know it?"

"Oh, she is as old as the hills, and she has known many wise folk who are now dead. They have told her."

Dorothy sat for a moment looking straight at him, with a laughing twinkle in her eye. "Oh, you dear, stupid boy," she said, with something of her old superiority. "You don't believe that?"

"Yes I do."

"Well, I, though I am not old as the hills, will tell you something far wiser. What you need is training, practice, study—not the Nixy's chords."

"But how am I to get it?"

"That I don't know; but I'll speak to father about it."

She made it her first business the next day to convince the pastor that Dagfinn was a musical genius; and when Dagfinn had played before the pastor, there was no longer any need of persuasion. It was soon decided that he must go abroad and study music at the conservatory of Leipzig. Germund was at first opposed to the plan. It seemed a hopeless undertaking to impress him with an idea which lay so remote from his sphere of thought. But one single phrase which the pastor employed seemed to smite his conscience.

"Genius," said he, "may as often be a curse as it is a blessing. Suppressed, combated, denied the opportunity for a full development, it becomes a source of misery. Fostered, encouraged, and granted the chance to attain mastery, it may afford the greatest happiness which this earthly life can yield. Are you willing to assume the responsibility of denying your son this chance?"

"No," the peasant answered, with the

fervor of deep conviction, "that I will never do."

The preparations for the journey were soon made, and Dagfinn was to take leave of the valley which contained all that was dear to him. But he was young and light-hearted, and flushed with radiant hopes. Only the thought of leaving Dorothy troubled him. He was in danger of misinterpreting her zeal in hastening his departure. She seemed so happy, so proud on his behalf, so trustfully secure; and it was not until he was gone that she discovered how empty the valley had become; how barren and meaningless the days which his companionship no longer brightened.

VI.

For five years Dagfinn remained in Germany: they were busy years, filled with toil, humiliation, and some few gleams of triumph. The masters at the conservatory scarcely knew what to make of the shy and stubborn peasant lad, who, with all his eagerness to learn, yet baffled their efforts to teach him. They made him play Hayden, Mozart, and Mendelssohn, and he played them coldly, laboriously, without a glimmer of intelligence. His improvisations they declared to be chaotic fantasies, defying every rule of composition, and every principle of thorough-bass. Into everything they gave him to study he imported an alien note, which they were at a loss to account for. The minor cadence seemed to come much more naturally to his hand than the major, and there was a haunting ghost of something elusively ineffable in his stroke, which was ugly or beautiful, repellant or alluring, according to your point of view or your musical bias. It was a matter of controversy at the conservatory whether it was simply idiotic perversity or genius, and the majority inclined to the former opinion, until an incident occurred which divided the camp about evenly.

It was the fifth year of Dagfinn's sojourn at the musical capital of the world. There was to be a semi-public concert, at which the pupils of the conservatory—or those who were accounted worthy—were to perform compositions of their own, after having first submitted them to the

criticism of their masters. Dagfinn composed a symphonic poem in the style of Liszt, choosing as his theme the Nixy, and finding his text in an old Norse ballad which by chance fell into his hands. It ran as follows :

'Neath the wild cascade, where billows wrestle,
Sits the Nixy* in despair,
And the silent fishes dart and nestle
In the meshes of his hair.
But at midnight's hour, when dark the woods and
still,
Raises he his head from out the waters chill :
" Love ! love ! love ! oh, thou whom I have lost,
Come, love, and soothe this soul with anguish
tossed."

Then his harp, so sad, so softly luring,
Trembles through the forest lone ;
And the maid whose woe is past enduring
Draws sweet solace from its tone.
Yearnings coy, that slumber in her bosom's deep,
Wake by strange enchantment from their troubled
sleep.
Hark ! hark ! hark ! What waves of wondrous
song
Sweep through the woods and float the fields
along.

Onward, then, with pulses hotly beating,
Flies the maid with wild delight,
Blindly drawn into the mystic meeting
By the Nixy's luring might.
Through the dusky waters gleam strange, yearning
eyes !
Loving arms reach forth and tender whispers rise :
" Come ! come ! come ! " She leaps into the wave !
Dumbly the billows wrestle o'er her grave !

There was a great difference of opinion among the professors at the conservatory as to whether the young Norwegian's composition on this theme should receive that stamp of approval which would entitle it to a public performance. But in the end it found a champion among the younger teachers, who, in his enthusiasm, declared that a new star of the first magnitude had risen upon the horizon of art. He carried the day, and Dagfinn's composition precipitated a battle between the conservatives and the progressives which came near having disastrous results. Half the audience hissed as frantically as the other half applauded at the performance of "The Nixy." The composer, who himself played the violin solo, was both praised and ridiculed, and the orchestral accompaniment was pronounced to be a splendid flight of imagination and an imbecile piece of

groveling idiocy. Musicians rarely know the golden mean. They are excessively emotional and have a preference for extravagant terms.

Dagfinn pondered the question whether he should send any of these criticisms home to Dorothy. It was rather on Dorothy's account than his own that he regretted the defeat which he fancied he had suffered. His honesty forbade him to send her the laudatory notices and suppress the uncomplimentary ones, for the latter so entirely occupied his mind that they spoiled his pleasure in the former. It seemed to him that he had been eternally disgraced and that people secretly pointed the finger of scorn at him in the street as the young composer who had been so unmercifully hissed. He knew how Dorothy would take it to heart if she knew it; for she had believed in him when he was nothing but a crude fledgeling, and it was her faith in him which had given him courage to hand in his composition. Nay, there was not a bar in the whole score into which he had not wrought his love for her,—which had not been inspired by some look of hers, by the cadence of her voice, the radiance of her smile, the glance of her eye. All the tender yearning, the turbulent desire, the chaotic passion which quivered and toiled in his chords were but variations of the ever-recurring theme—his life-theme, he called it—his love for Dorothy. It could not be expressed in that classically severe method of Mendelssohn, nor with the sweet, thin, old-fashioned simplicity of Hayden, because there was a deep, mystic strain in it derived from the dark forests and rivers of Norway, with all their dusky poetry of hulders, trolls, and nixies.

A fancy which haunted him with increasing persistence was to compose a symphony which was to express Dorothy—or his own love for her. The idea had taken a firm hold of him from his boyhood, that she was the highest prize of life, the most glorious reward of effort. She was the princess that the Ashiepattle won, and she was the kingdom, too, of joy and bliss, and he needed no other. Failure was the loss of Dorothy, for it meant a life wasted and sterilized in the bud, bearing neither blossom nor fruit.

* The Nixy is, in Norse tradition male, not, as in English, female.



*Drawn by
Osterlind.*

"THE LANTERN SPREAD A VAGUE CIRCLE OF LIGHT ABOUT HER HEAD."

THE NIXY'S CHORD.

BY HJALMAR HJORTH BOYSEN.

VII.

THE air was wondrously still on the Sunday morning in June when he returned home; but there were vague resoundings round about him of the name Dorothy. He was ashamed to think of how little account all other things were to him. The meeting with his parents left him cold and oppressed with an awkward constraint. His father, who had probably shared in his own illusions, was disappointed and could not forbear to show it. His mother took note of his changed appearance and his fine clothes, and asked if they were not very expensive. His brother Halvar inquired, mockingly, whether he was going to set up for a gentleman now, and expressed the hope that his fiddling might turn out sufficiently profitable to warrant the change of costume. Dagfinn, though he was burning to see Dorothy, had to postpone his visit until the afternoon; then he pushed the boat into the river and rowed down to the parsonage. As he ran up the garden path, he met a handsome young gentleman wearing a light straw hat and smoking a cigar. He seemed to survey the place with a sense of proprietorship which to Dagfinn was alarming. He felt as if some one had clutched him by the throat; in the twinkling of an eye, an indefinable change came over the landscape. It was as if a rude hand had suddenly strangled the joyous voices in the air, as if a veil had been drawn over the sun; and the river ran with dumb writhings, as in a nightmare.

He would not have believed that the tall, beautiful lady who met him in the door was Dorothy, if she had not offered him her hand, and with quiet cordiality assured him that she was glad to see him. He did not exactly know what else he had expected, but he was so disappointed that he could have wept. Of the old charming camaraderie there was not a vestige left. What transformation she had undergone it would be difficult to define. There was a certain reserve in her manner which he interpreted as an intentional

rebuff, and a sweet, benign something which to his jaundiced eye looked like condescension. But beautiful she was—entrancingly beautiful. There was nothing of the young miss about her any more; no explosions of suppressed mirthfulness; no demure knowingness; no glances of sly confidence; no adorable gaucheries or blushing embarrassments. She was serene, gentle,—nay, even cordial; but there was a kind of aloofness in her cordiality which to a lover might have the effect of a chill. He sat and talked with her on the veranda with an inexplicable, anxious oppression. She inspired him with a great respect for her intelligence and practical sense. There was a native refinement about her which exhaled from her like a faint, sweet perfume; no visible eagerness to please; no transparent bids for admiration; no quirks and contortions of uneasy vanity. As far as he could judge, she was utterly unconscious of her beauty, which had a warmer tinge, as it were, and a nobler expressiveness than the prickly bud of five years ago.

She must now be twenty-two years, he reckoned, as she was two years younger than himself. What more natural, then, than that she should be engaged to the handsome young gentleman in the garden? And that was obviously what this half-sisterly interest, this kindly straightforwardness meant.

"Now tell me all about yourself," she urged, with smiling insistence, "you know I am curious. You need not wait to have me ask you."

"There is very little to tell," he replied with a sinking heart. And, really, there seemed to be nothing at all. Half an hour ago it had seemed that he would need weeks and months to disburden himself of all the confidences he was yearning to share with her; and now he was actually at a loss for something to say. The young gentleman with the straw hat came sauntering up, and she accomplished the ceremony of introduction (which to Dagfinn had always appeared an awkward matter) with a smiling ease which

again lifted her into the regions of the unattainable.

"Einar," she said, addressing the young man, "this is my friend, Mr. Jonsrud, of whom I have told you. Candidate Ritter, Mr. Jonsrud."

"Pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Jonsrud," observed Mr. Ritter, putting his pince-nez on his nose, and eyeing Dagfinn as if he were an interesting animal. "You are the youth, I believe, who aspires to capture the Nixy's chords?"

Dagfinn, fancying that he detected a suspicion of mockery in this remark, flushed with mortification and wrath. He could well imagine how imbecile such an aspiration must seem to a city-bred candidate of theology who looked upon all folk-lore as curious relics of barbarism. But the fact that Dorothy called him by his first name, Einar, was so paralyzing that he sat mute and dumbfounded, and could summon no spirit to resent the affront. They must surely be engaged, then; in which case there was nothing for him to do but to betake himself away—out of her life—and make room for the happy lover. But, somehow, he could not make up his mind to this generous course. The fighting instinct of his race was strong in him, and he burned to quarrel with this presumptuous stranger and spoil his taste for sneering at what he did not understand. Dorothy, perceiving that the two gentlemen did not take kindly to each other, made haste to interpose some conciliatory remarks.

"You ought to hear Dagfinn play," she said to her theological friend. "I assure you he is a great artist."

"Do not be rash, pray," warned Dagfinn, with forced lightness; "you have not heard me yet."

"But I must hear you, and that soon."

"Perhaps."

"Why, perhaps? I hope that when I ask you to play for me, you will not refuse."

"That depends upon how you ask."

"I would say: 'Dear Dagfinn, I, Dorothy, who believed in you when no one else did, ask you to play for me.'"

There was a mingling of mirth and seriousness in her manner which gave him a glimpse of the old Dorothy of beloved memory. She was so adorable with her

dimples, the laughing twinkle in her eye, and the sweet roguery of her voice, that he forgot his resentment and answered:

"If you asked me like that, I could not resist."

"Mr. Jonsrud has at least one characteristic of a great musician," Mr. Ritter observed with sneering superiority.

"And what is that, pray?"

"He has to be coaxed."

"And he has another, too," Dagfinn observed, with the determination to pay the young man in his own coin.

"And that is—if I may be so free?"

"He can, for the sake of a friend, overlook an impertinence."

He arose, without betraying his excitement, and bade Dorothy and her visitor good-by. The former's features were slightly flushed, and as she gave him her hand, she looked at him with an imploring expression as if to entreat him not to make trouble. Mr. Ritter, in deference to a glance from her, made no remark, but bowed to Dagfinn with ironical politeness.

VIII.

A whole week elapsed before Dagfinn received the expected message from the parsonage, requesting him to play. He realized that much was at stake, and he was in doubt whether he should comply. With that odious Ritter sitting and staring at him, he would be capable of playing badly. And, somehow, the idea took possession of him that it was his life's happiness which was involved in the issue. As Dorothy had reminded him, she had believed in his genius when no one else did. No wonder she demanded of him now that he should justify her belief. But an apprehension (which almost amounted to a certainty that he would put himself and her to shame) clutched with icy fingers at his heart. Whenever he touched the violin, it sounded so strangely ghostlike and hollow, lacking the deep, vibrating ring which in former days it yielded at his touch. It was like the mere shadow of sound,—a feeble, fantastic echo of the emotions he was burning to interpret. The sweet and simple note—the moving, soul-stirring cadence—that constantly rang in his ears, was always floating a little beyond his reach, and perpetually eluding him.



Drawn by Osterlind.

"HE STRUCK INTO THE GRAND SYMPHONY OF FOREST, AIR, AND WATER."

He suffered as he had never dreamed that he could suffer, during the week that elapsed between the invitation to the parsonage and the appointed evening. He learned, incidentally, that all the official magnates of the parish,—the governor, the judge, the sheriff, and district physician, with their families, had been invited; and that everybody's expectations were pitched to the highest point. But what did he care for all the rest, if only he could enable Dorothy to glory in his triumph? He fancied how she would look, and how delicious would be the intonation of her voice if she could say: "Ladies and gentlemen, this great artist, who has stirred the depths of your souls by his wonderful music, is my old friend, Dagfinn Jonsrud, whose genius I was the first to discover."

But something far more precious than his artistic fame seemed to be trembling in the balance. Dorothy herself, for whom he had been working as Jacob worked for Rachel, through the long, miserable years, was the stake for which he was playing. It was of no use that he tried to persuade himself that this was an irrational, boyish fancy. It was too intimately identified with his deepest aspirations to be dismissed. You might as well tell the Ashiepattle when he had slain the giant and removed the forest, and captured the magic bird, that the princess, on second thought, had concluded to marry a gentleman of her own rank.

The violin had formerly been his refuge from tormenting thoughts; but now it only aroused them and sent them swarming about his head in angry chorus. Yet, in his hope for an inspiration, he carried it with him everywhere. Jealousy, wrath, fear for his reason, kept chasing torturing fantasies through his mind until he writhed with agony. On the night before the party at the parsonage he had sauntered up through the birch grove above the Jonsrud farm; and as he seated himself on a boulder under a tree, thrumming idly on the strings, he noticed a bonfire on the other side of the valley. Presently another was kindled, and another, until all the hills for miles around seemed to be ablaze with flame. Then it occurred to him that it was midsummer night. The old story of the Nixy playing under the cataract emerged from the haze of

boyish memories, and he began to wonder whether it were really true that his father had learned from the Nixy that touch which set all his nerves tingling with delight when he listened to him. That his playing was unlike that of any other musician he had ever heard, was indisputable; and yet he had never had a music lesson in all his life. If he, Dagfinn, could but catch that wondrously moving note, then he would not fear the result of his playing at the parsonage.

How strangely hushed the forest was! It was as if all nature were holding its breath in expectant stillness. The cataract boomed with a deep and muffled roar; but that, too, blended with the silence, became part of it, and intensified it. Then a sudden sensation stole over him that some one, or something, was gazing with a wide-open, rigid, yet gentle glance; and a faint shudder rippled down his back. The night was warm, but not oppressive, and the sun was just dipping beneath the low western mountain ridge. The sense of a presence close by him and round about him—a lovely, beneficent, but yet vaguely alarming presence—grew upon him, and the thought flashed through his mind that this presence was capable of expression in music. There was something so ineffably rich and strange in it,—richly and strangely familiar, he would have said in the next minute,—which corresponded somehow to the unspoken and unspeakable within him, which always trembled on the verge of expression, but never passed the verge. And it came from the river,—quite distinctly from the river,—and there was a delicious rhythm in it; and the more intensely he listened the more delicious it seemed,—until a bird suddenly screamed, and it vanished like a thing that had never been and never could be. Then all the forest, the earth, and the air seemed to be listening for it,—breathlessly, longingly,—and Dagfinn felt an irresistible desire to lure it, gently, within the range of expression. He touched the violin with the tenderest, airiest touch; but so tame was the sound it gave, so glaringly feeble, that he could almost have wept at its impotence. Then silence reigned again—a silence of deep and anxious expectancy.

For a long time he sat still, resting his elbow on his knee, and stared through the

trees toward the river. A light shiver passed through the tree-tops and it passed through him, too,—the sort of shiver which you feel at the sight of something surpassingly beautiful. The tears came into his eyes, and there began to ring in his ears a vague, rich sound as of mighty bells infinitely remote, but infinitely alluring. There was again the same deliciously lovely rhythm, and with a wonderful delight it flashed upon him that it was the same rhythm and the same ghostly melody which had haunted him from his boyhood. Catch it he must, and fix it forever, for it was so simple,—so touchingly simple,—and perfectly capable of being rendered in a few lovely notes. He rose, put the violin to his chin, and walking step by step in the direction whither the illusive strain led him, found himself at the cataract. He could have shouted with joy! The water, too, had caught the strain, and it grew audible and more audible,—defined itself as a beautiful, luminous thing that slowly emerges from an enveloping haze. Glorious and more glorious it sounded! It became a gently billowing sea of music, and he caught a snatch of it here and a snatch there, until suddenly he struck a full, noble, and inconceivably rapturous chord. All he had played, or tried to play before, was a groping in a fog for this wondrous thing which now he had found.

And magnificently he struck into the grand symphony of forest, air, and water, and his playing no longer sounded feeble and out of tune, but blended richly in the harmony. Chord after chord he struck—the second, third, and fourth, and the souls of all things lay bare before him,—beautifully, shimmeringly bare,—the inexpressible which hovers with tantalizing glimpses on the horizon of the mind, became vocal, groping no longer for itself with a dim instinct, but floating blissfully along with a clear, entrancing cadence. Then, into the midst of his play poured, like a warm stream, his love for Dorothy, and his blood surged through his veins to the rhythm of the ineffable melody. He was distinctly conscious of a heightened life—a more exalted being; and, ere he knew it, he had struck a new chord—was it the fifth or sixth?—which shot like a fiery flame through his nerves. And there appeared higher heights above him,

and deeper deeps below him than he had ever dreamed of before, and the nobly intensified glow of being sharpened and refined all his senses, so that the exercise of each became rapture. The soul itself—the essence of things—for the expression of which he had wrestled in anguish and despair, and of which only shadowy hints had reached him—hovered before him like a great, living, dewy, luminous pearl that had shed its shell, and quivered and sparkled with pure, indwelling radiance. But the moment he tried to grasp it, it dissolved in a mist of exquisitely delicious sound, which breathed with a warm, strange pulsation through his play, and lifted him out of himself, so that he seemed no longer to touch the earth, but rose through brighter regions, where all things that met the eye or smote the ear were a pure delight. But his thoughts and his feelings, though they seemed clear and beautifully vocal, were yet beyond the range of human expression. He only knew that he rose blissfully higher and higher, striking chords that no mortal ear ever heard before, and at last losing himself in a luminous shimmer of rapturous sound.

He was recalled to consciousness by the sudden cessation of the music. He found himself sitting on a stone by the cataract, with his feet in the water, fiddling the empty air. But before him stood his father, with a terrified countenance, holding a knife in his hand. Looking down, Dagfinn saw, with a shudder, that all the strings of his violin were cut.

IX.

It was published in the papers that week that it had pleased his majesty, King Oscar II., to appoint Einar Krohn Ritter, cand. theol., personal assistant to the Rev. Theodore Holm, pastor of the parish of ———, etc. As Mr. Ritter's sojourn at the parsonage had obviously been preliminary to this appointment, and as he was understood to have pleased the parson's daughter no less than the parson himself, it was taken for granted that his engagement to Dorothy would be announced without delay. In fact, it was generally understood that the great party which Mr. Holm was giving was to be in celebration of the happy event. This

rumor, which aroused considerable interest in all the "genteel" families, reached Dagfinn just as he had finished stringing his violin, and was about to row down to the parsonage; but, strange to say, it made no vivid impression upon him. The exalted mood of the night was yet vibrating in his mind, and all his soul was resounding with faint echoes of what he had heard and felt. He could afford to smile at such idle gossip. He knew that Dorothy belonged to him—even though he might lose her.

Rural gatherings in Norway usually begin early in the afternoon, and the present one was no exception. When Dagfinn arrived he found the garden and the house filled with guests, who greeted him with the kindly condescension which the gentry adopt toward the peasantry. Though he was city-clad, and had seen a good deal more of the world than most of them, they yet had a patronizing feeling toward him, because they knew him only as the peasant lad Dagfinn Jonsrud who was rather a clever fiddler. A chill of disappointment crept over him at the utter flatness of the social tone—the lack of expectation, even, as to what he could do. Dorothy, who looked lovely in a white dress with blue ribbons, came forward and greeted him with that friendly cordiality to which at their last meeting he had objected; and Mr. Ritter, who was perpetually at her side, treated him with a benevolent superiority which he was far from relishing. It was a great relief to him that preparations were immediately made for his performance. The large drawing-room and the adjoining garden-parlor were soon thronged with guests.

A music-stand was placed before him, as everybody expected that he would play Berlioz's "Damnation of Faust," or Paganini's "Venetian Carnival," or some such stock piece of the violin virtuoso. Dorothy, who took her seat right in front of him between her mother and Mr. Ritter, inquired if he did not want some one to turn the leaves; and she was, perhaps, a trifle hurt because he made her no reply. The fact was, the fervor of emotion which seethed and burned within him made it impossible to speak. His whole nervous system was so quiveringly tense that it would seem that the least touch would make something snap. He became

aware, as he stood facing his audience, that the pastor had risen in his seat and was making a little speech. But though he heard the words "native genius," "glory of old Norway," and "the fame of the fatherland," he could not make out what they meant, and he forgot to make the customary bow of acknowledgment when the pastor sat down. For something ineffably sweet was ringing in his brain, and he felt that he now could render it. It was the wondrous elusive melody—the inexpressibly alluring strain which had haunted him in his boyhood, and which he had endeavored to embody in the theme of his symphonic poem—"The Nixy." He had resolved now to play without orchestral accompaniment. It had been a failure at the Gewandhaus in Leipsic; but he had then lacked—well, he had lacked the Nixy's chords.

People were chatting, fanning themselves, and fidgeting in their seats, as he put the violin to his chin; and there was a perpetual rustle of skirts and whispered remarks about his appearance.

"Isn't he handsome, though?" murmured Mrs. Holm to Dorothy. "Who would ever have supposed that that uncouth boy could grow to be such a presentable fellow?"

Dorothy only nodded, and then shook her head at Mr. Ritter, who had opened his mouth to make a sarcastic remark. The bow was drawn across the strings, and there was an instant silence.

"'Neath the wild cascade, where billows wrestle,
Sits the Nixy in despair;
And the silent fishes dart and nestle
In the meshes of his hair."

The sad resignation and contemplative melancholy of the opening movement was rendered with noble directness and force. It was the lonely soul, isolated by dint of its greatness, yearning for human love and companionship. It was that shuddering loneliness of genius, which is hopeless and eternal, because, in its own age, its best and loftiest thoughts are beyond the comprehension of contemporaries.

"But at midnight's hour, when dark the woods
and still,
Raises he his head from out the waters chill:
'Love, love, love! Oh, thou whom I have lost,
Come, love, and soothe this soul with anguish
tossed.'"



Drawn by Osterlind.

"DOROTHY TOOK HER SEAT RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM.

There was something so shudderingly grand in the conception of the adagio, representing the Nixy rising from the midnight waters, that a perceptible breeze of rapture passed through the audience. It was as if the composer had caught the deepest law of musical interpretation, which seizes the innermost essence of the thing to be interpreted and lets it flow forth in nobly inspired phrases, which ripple through the nerves with a nameless delight. But he rose to his highest height in the passages where the Nixy cries out for her whom he has lost. The quivering wail of yearning love,—the imperious, irresistible demand of triumphant love,—the pleading, beseeching, imploring cry of doubting love, alternated with a moving power and pathos which swept the audience off their feet, and made them tremble and glow with each changing emotion which the composer conjured up. And Dorothy, who had shrunk at first from his gaze, now met with a blushing directness his eyes, which were riveted upon her. She comprehended all of a sudden that this was addressed to her, and to her alone. The scherzo, when it came, was a melodious rendering of her own girlish self. There gleamed through the passionate strain lovely little memories of their childhood, and with a certain exquisitely tender afflatus, he interpreted her to herself. Her mirthful vision of life that broke through the demure mask in her fledgling period; her risibility and her wrath, her scorn of things masculine, her pouts and sulks,—all that she now was ashamed of, had been preserved as something precious in his mind, and she saw in a swift glance the touching devotion with which he had always cherished her. She felt the tears burning under her eyelids, and one by one they coursed down her cheeks. They were warm, happy tears, which broke the heavy spell of silence, and enabled her to breathe once more from the depth of her breast. How beautiful was this stanch faith of his, and how significant appeared all the lovely little absurdities of their common youth,—the dear, foolish things they had said and done, never suspecting their folly. It was incredible how much he remembered; but it was still more incredible how well she understood. Each chord rang with a marvelous, stirring resonance

through all the chambers of her heart, and its message was plain as speech, nay, plainer than speech, and infinitely warmer, intenser, surcharged with a quivering sense of all that had hitherto been inexpressible.

The minuet movement which followed told her of her aberration,—her waning faith in him, her fading memory of him, her swerving from the ideal of fidelity from which he had never faltered. He told her that she had understood him perfectly when he went away, even though no word had been spoken; that his life was hers, because it was she who had awakened it into consciousness; that she could not, even though she would, live happily apart from him; if, indeed, she could live at all. There was something imposing, overwhelming, in the imperious demand which, in the name of love, he hurled at her, that she quailed before the inexorable veracity of those heart-searching tones. It was through her that he had come to feel and value the surpassing endowment of his nature—the divine meaning of his life. And her own life had become richer, fuller, nobler through her sympathy with his. Could she afford to trample down this newly-kindled flame, and smother these newly-aroused voices? It was toward the supreme moment of this mutual recognition—and the fruition of the happiness of which it was the pledge—that their existence had tended from the moments of their birth. Nay, it was for this they had been born. A blight of futility and failure would fall upon them; they would be doomed to an unappeasable heart-hunger,—a sense of emptiness that is bitterer than despair,—if, having known this profound and blissful kinship of soul, they ignored its promptings and contented themselves with shallower loves.

A tempestuous allegro, descriptive of the flight of the maid through the forest, and her leaping into the cataract, came like a sudden spring storm that sweeps across the sky with thunder, and darkness, and precipitous showers. It presented a magnificent burst of imagination, a veritable explosion of daringly original imagery, a supreme upwelling of elemental power. The violin wailed, and sighed, and rumbled, and shrieked; wild unearthly harpings swept through

the air, as of mighty trees bending before the blast,—and through it all trembled the elusive, the ineffably alluring melody. All of a sudden all nature was hushed, listening with bated breath to the Nixy's strain :

"Through the dusky waters gleam strange, yearning eyes,
Loving arms reach forth, and tender whispers rise;
Come! Come! Come! She leaps into the wave,
Dumbly the billows wrestle o'er her grave."

For a full minute after Dagfinn had ceased playing, not a sound was heard. The audience sat immovable, with strained ears and eyes, as under a spell of silence. Then the pastor rose, as if he were going to speak once more. With a light frown of preoccupation, he drew himself erect and cleared his throat, whereupon the enchantment was at an end, and a storm of cheers and applause broke loose.

Dorothy, with a far-away look in her eyes, remained sitting in front of Dagfinn, smiling to him, oblivious of everything about her. When Mr. Ritter spoke to her, she shivered, but made no answer. Then, with a somnambulistic movement, as she was recalled from the land of dreams, she began to stroke her face hard with her right hand, as if to rub away an invisible film. Her glance fixed itself upon Mr. Ritter, with a dawning surprise, in which a vague fear was blended. How shallow he looked, how direfully commonplace! There was something about him, as he opened his mouth to address her, which she had never detected before, and it made her almost hate him. It was—well it was hardly capable of expression—but it seemed that the key-note of his nature was all wrong. It struck a thin, flimsy, trivial chord—not a rich, rare, and splendidly resonant one, like that of Dagfinn. Mr. Ritter, it presently flashed upon her, was conceited; his scornful superiority and sarcasm, and his pride in his culture, which she had hitherto admired, were all indications of a shallow heart and a shallow brain. He was hollow and showy, like a drum.

While the guests were scattering, in animated conversation through the house and the garden, Dorothy went up to Dagfinn and seized his hand. Her face was radiant, and the light in her eyes was

warm and tender. There was an intelligence so complete and beautiful in her glance that he dismissed all fears, and only pressed her hand in return, and gazed at her with a blissful confidence. Then Mr. Ritter, prompted by uneasy jealousy, came up ostensibly to congratulate him, but really to make an end of their tête-à-tête.

"It was a very creditable performance, my young friend," he said with odious patronage; "I really think that I may, without risk of being called a false prophet, predict a career for you as a musician."

Dagfinn felt as if he had received an icy douche. He dropped Dorothy's hand and looked at her as if he hoped that she would make the proper reply. But she remained dumb, and only a little tremor of her lips betrayed the emotion under which she was laboring. "I have no doubt," Mr. Ritter continued, in the same fluent and self-satisfied tone, "that my fiancée has already assured you how very highly we appreciate your kindness in giving us this rare treat on this occasion, so very auspicious both to myself and Miss Holm."

Fiancée! Then it was true, after all! The landscape reeled before Dagfinn's eyes; a strange faintness stole over him; his limbs seemed numb and withered. Dorothy was yet standing at his side, gazing at him with wan cheeks and piteous eyes. Her lips, which were very white, moved as if she were trying to speak, but not a sound did she produce. He could endure it no longer. Seeing Mrs. Holm approach with a couple of ladies whom she evidently intended to introduce, he seized his violin-case and rushed out of a side door into the garden.

X.

It was a torture to Dorothy to be obliged to listen to the colonel's, and the sheriff's, and the judge's patronizing praise of Dagfinn's playing. From her unresponsive manner they derived the impression that she was not very musical, or had been too absorbed in her fiancé to pay strict attention. She had to exert herself to the utmost to be decently polite—to keep from betraying the tumult which raged within her. As soon as the be-

numbed and stupefied feeling had begun to give way to definite sensations, a swarm of bright hopes came drifting into her mind like flocks of sweet-voiced birds that come flying out of the sunset and sing as they fly. And then, before she knew it, the resolution, which a moment ago she had not even dared contemplate, was irrevocably taken. She went to Mr. Ritter, who was drifting from group to group, receiving premature congratulations, and told him that she had been under a delusion in regard to him. She declared, with a wan, little smile (which seemed to him very mysterious), that she did not love him, and she begged him to forgive her for having unwittingly deceived him as well as herself. She felt quite kindly toward him, while she spoke, because of the wrong she had done him. But when he refused to take her declaration seriously, and in a superior tone told her that she was overwrought and hysterical, that she needed rest, and had better excuse herself for an hour and go to bed, she suddenly hated him. There was something so odious in his clerical blandness, and in his consciousness of his good looks, his faultless attire, and affable manners, that she could not comprehend how she could ever have taken him to be genuine.

As argument with him would have been worse than futile, Dorothy bethought herself of a stratagem. She must, at all hazards, prevent the public announcement of her engagement to Mr. Ritter. The table was already being set in the dining-room, and she knew that her father would, at supper, rise in his seat and propose the health of the betrothed couple, and then would come the official congratulations. This could not be; it must not be. She would employ all her powers of persuasion to induce her father to omit the toast.

She lay in wait for him a full hour before she succeeded in catching him alone, and then, as it proved, she was too late. Mr. Ritter had already apprised him of what he was to expect, and he firmly declined to disgrace himself and her, and scandalize the parish, by such a flagrant breach of faith and violation of custom. She was evidently ill from overfatigue and excitement; to-morrow she would feel differently; if she desired to go to

bed, he would make her excuses to the company.

The hour until supper dragged fearfully. She still cherished a vague hope that her father would concede to her wish. At eight o'clock the supper was announced, and the gentlemen hastened to capture tables, and chairs, and to intrench their ladies in comfortable nooks, whence they started out on foraging expeditions, bringing back whatever booty they had secured. There were delicacies of the most varied kind, for Mrs. Holm prided herself on her cooking. There were cold dishes and hot dishes; and the cold dishes were not warm, nor were the hot dishes cold. There were roasted ptarmigan chicks, with a gravy of marvelous savoriness, which made all other eatables for weeks to come taste stale and insipid.

Dorothy, much as she rebelled against it, had, in deference to custom, taken her seat at Mr. Ritter's side. She had as yet no definite plan. She must await developments. She had a feeling that she appeared queer; that people were putting their heads together in whispered comments on her seriousness, her abstraction, her behavior toward her fiancé. But it troubled her scarcely at all. Mr. Ritter, in order to make her reserve less noticeable, talked with a terrible fluency, complimented the young ladies, laughed at the gentlemen's jokes, and reaped golden opinions from the dowagers for his charming affability and attention. But to Dorothy there was something awful in his loud, mirthless laughter. It gave a certain fierceness to his face, a touch of something sinister.

A sudden silence fell upon the vivacious company as the pastor stepped to the head of the table, and tapped with his knife on his glass. He spoke with much feeling about a certain auspicious event which had given him and his wife the most heartfelt satisfaction, and made them look forward without apprehension to their declining years, etc. He praised, discreetly and judiciously, his daughter, who had now made her choice of a helpmeet for life, "unprompted by aught, save the voice of her own loving heart," and he lauded in still higher tones the Rev. Mr. Ritter, who was a very incarnation of all virtues and perfections. When he had wrought himself up to a fitting climax



"THERE WAS AN INTELLIGENCE SO
BEAUTIFUL IN HER GLANCE."

Drawn by Osterlind

of eloquence, he raised his glass and proposed the health of the betrothed pair, the Rev. Einar Ritter and Dorothy Holm.

All the guests rose, lifting their filled glasses, and Mr. Ritter turned half around to touch his glass to Dorothy's — when, lo! the place at his side was empty. He stood staring at it, the smile still rigid on his startled face, as if he were utterly unable to comprehend what had happened. The pastor, who had advanced across the floor with the same purpose, stood dumb with amazement; and a feeling of consternation and embarrassment took possession of the whole company. The house was ransacked from cellar to garret, the garden was searched by anxious parties from one end to the other, and there were even those who volunteered to drag the horse-pond. But no trace was found of Dorothy. Some of the ladies declared that they had seen her slip out of the room into the front hall during her father's speech; but as they took it for granted that she would return in a moment, they had seen no reason for interfering. For a full hour bedlam reigned in and about the parsonage. There were slamming of doors, running to and fro, excited exclamations, and shouts of "Dorothy" in falsetto, treble, and bass; but there came no response, and Dorothy was and remained invisible.

XI.

There was no one who thought of looking for Dorothy on the river. And yet it was her figure which a shaft of moonlight, falling upon waters, revealed. She was sitting in a boat, rowing against the current; but happily the current was not strong, and she was making fair headway. She saw the Chinese lanterns glow among the foliage of the parsonage garden, and she heard voices in many keys shouting her name; but she bent the more vigorously over her oars, shooting along swiftly and silently, until she had rounded the point. Then, being safely out of sight, she took it more leisurely.

She felt no fatigue. Her agitation had keyed her nerves up to a tensiety where every sense is sharpened and the resources of one's strength seem unlimited. She had ceased to think or to reason. An irresistible force drove her onward. The wonderful Nixy's chords rang in her ear.

Now they sounded soft and cooing like a sweet lullaby; now caressing, alluring, beseeching, like a lover's voice. Out of the misty depth of the night faint stars gleamed, twinkled, and went out. Silent, swift-winged creatures flitted through the dusk; and every now and then strange, harplike vibrations swept through the air. Then, as she passed the wooded island, whose inverted reflection trembled in the water, she heard shrill, frightened screams as of birds in distress. They tore wide rents in the stillness, and the wonderful melody vanished for a long while; and she could hear nothing but the splashing of her oars and the swish of the water under the bow. Before she knew it she plunged into an eddy which nearly swung the boat around, and she had to struggle to get free of the current. Now the Jonsrud farm hove into view, with its large, red-painted barns under the edge of the forest. It then occurred to her what a sensation her coming would produce. Germund Jonsrud, being a friend of her father's, might be capable of sending her home again. She would not land at the pier, but in the wooded cove where the Jonsrud creek emptied into the river. Hugging the bank, she slid along in the shadow of the pines until she reached the inlet. Then she sprang ashore, tied the boat to a tree root, and resolved to walk up to the house.

The creek, which was very full for the season, was flowing crystal-clear, with gentle murmurs over the white stones. But hush! that was not the murmuring waters. Through the trees there came a throbbing cadence, which faintly disentangled itself from the silence, and again melted into it, hovering upon the outermost verge of the sense—but marvelous, glorious—ineffably sweet. Pulsating with a rich, beguiling rhythm through the shining sea of mist, and, strange to relate, gazing at her, as it were, with large, dreamy eyes, so wild and yet so inexpressibly gentle, breathing through the tree-tops with rapturous shudders, calling her name with the imperious might of love that had endured and suffered—what wonder that she yielded! What could she do but follow the wondrous call; what could she do, but push onward—onward—until she stood by the cataract and felt the cold spray blowing

into her face? But suddenly as she seemed to pause at the very fount of the music, some one rose up from a stone at her side and the music ceased.

"Dagfinn!" she cried, and started forward as if she would rush into his embrace.

"Dorothy!"

He flung his arms about her, and she clung to him with a glow of noble joy, drew herself back, and gazed at him with dewy eyes, then again buried her face on his bosom. And each time he kissed her, she whispered: "You dear, dear boy," and a deep, beautiful blush poured itself over her neck and face. There was something so touching to him in her loving surrender, that he felt for a moment half unnerved, and he could do nothing but gaze at her, and marvel at her beauty, her preciousness, and the inconceivable happiness which had come to him. Then they sat down together on the stone at the creek, and she asked him how he came to be here at this time of night.

"I wanted to strike the seventh chord," was his answer.

She pondered that for a long while, and then said: "And lose your soul?"

"I thought it was lost already. In losing you, I should have lost all; and there was nothing left worth saving."

"Oh, Dagfinn, do not say that," she begged with sweet insistence as she stroked caressingly the hair from his forehead.

"Why should I not say it, when it is true? I have no life apart from you."

"It dawned upon me so wonderfully to-day. It was as if you spoke straight to me."

"I did."

"And I understood you,—oh, so deeply,—so clearly. It was that which brought me."

"All hearts understand it, and it is the only thing which all hearts understand."

"Understand what?" she queried vaguely.

"The Nixy's chord."

"I will tell you what the Nixy's chord is," she rejoined, beaming upon him with a beautiful virginal tenderness; "it is love—your love for me, and mine for you."

He clasped her in a long embrace. But hush! As their lips and their souls met, the elusive, ineffable melody was there, ringing out with a clear, rich, and glorious cadence. But they could not tell whether it was without or within them.

It was past midnight when Dagfinn pushed Dorothy's boat into the water. He offered to row her home, but she was so earnest in her refusal that he forbore to urge. Half an hour later she entered the front door at the parsonage, when the guests had departed, and she told her father where she had been. The next day the Rev. Einar Ritter returned to the city, and a month later the pastor published from the pulpit the banns of Dagfinn Jonsrud and his "beloved daughter, Dorothy Holm."

[THE END.]



Drawn by
Osterlind.



Drawn by José Cabrinety.

THE COSMOPOLITAN

From every man according to his ability: to every one according to his need.

VOL. XIX.

OCTOBER, 1895.

No. 6.



Drawn by José Cabrinety.

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.

BY ELIZABETH C. CARDOZO.

FOR many days I pursued a beautiful flying figure. And when I had come up with it, behold, its face was very fair, and it smiled into my eyes. I put out my hand and drew it close, whispering,

Who art thou?

It answered,

Men call me Pleasure, but for thee I bear another name.

I asked,

Sweet, wilt thou not tell me the name that thou bearest for me alone?

It answered,

For thee, my name is Sin.

I looked longingly into the smiling eyes; nevertheless, I loosed my hand and turned away.

There soon came across my path a flying shape of wondrous aspect. I was long pursuing it, and when I came up with it, behold, its face was very fair.

I questioned it,

Who art thou?

It answered,

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Drawn by José Cabriety.

Men call me Love, but for thee I bear another name. One in a thousand meets with me; then hold me fast, thou chosen one, for but once in a lifetime do I come.

So I abode with Love for many days before I dared to put the question that haunted me. But at last I said,

Sweet, wilt thou not tell me what may be the name that thou bearest for me alone?

Then Love flashed a glance upon me and answered,
For thee I am Sin.

So, after one long, lingering look I dropped Love's hand and departed.

Now it befell that on a bitter day, in a dismal place, a figure passed before me. It fled not away from me, but, at my call, came

close. It wore, I thought, a quiet look, and in the cold, gray setting of earth and sky, its face was very fair.

Who art thou? I questioned.

It answered,

I am Death; but for thee, nay, for all that summon me, I bear another name.

I said,

With thee I shall find Peace. Pleasure and Love are both denied me; what is left me but Death?

And I drew near and would have clasped it, but I bethought me of that other name it bore, and I questioned concerning it.

Death said,

For thee, and all that summon me, my name is Sin.

So once more I turned and went my way sorrowing. It chanced, after many days, that there came one from behind me silently, and plucked me by the sleeve.

I said,

Who art thou, and what wouldst thou with me? Art thou, too, of the brood of Sin?

And I turned and beheld the figure that was of a hard and rugged aspect, but of a strength that was nigh unto beauty.

It said,

Some call me Labor and some call me by another name, but my bearing is the same unto all humanity.

So I abode with Labor many days, and I questioned not concerning that other name, for I had learned that it was Peace.



Drawn by José Cabrinety.

A TRAGEDY OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

BY MRS. F. W. DAWSON.



Drawn by
E. W. Kemble.

THEN why did she not keep the pigs from his cotton-patch? He had warned her! No man of his race ever failed to keep his word! By the eternal powers of mud and the State of South Carolina, he was a gentleman! He never said a thing he did not mean! This thing had gone on long enough. Again and again he had said, "Sure as you let those hogs of yours in my cotton, I'll blow your brains out!" Did they believe him? Well, they knew now whether he kept his word or not! Thank themselves for playing with fire once too often! Why did he not kill the pigs? Well! he had not thought of that. He had remembered he had to keep his word. By the powers of mud, a gentleman has to think of that first!

But this was in his twilight, whisky-strengthened meditation on the broad piazza.

When the sun had been overhead, hours ago, he was standing there looking at Scipio, who had fallen asleep bolt upright, sustained by the handle of his hoe, which had ceased to turn the soil. The colonel had retired to the house to fortify himself with his midday toddy. Scipio took the next best thing, from his point of view—a nap. As the colonel, mellowed by the subtle influence of the old corn whisky, stepped out on the sunlit piazza, those depraved pigs, before his very eyes, were ravaging his one hope of earning a living. Scipio, with a jerk that made the hoe scatter the soil, awakened at the ringing cry, "Here! you, Scipio!" He sprang forward briskly.

The colonel advanced with compressed lips and resolute stride. His hand grasped a gun. "Come along!" was his brief command.

Scipio followed, neither demurring nor questioning. Indeed, a bolder man than Scipio would have shrunk from inquiring the meaning of that deadly and intense silence. The colonel's fixed eyes and martial stride inspired caution. A clear, young voice rang out on the silence:

"Pa-a!"

The colonel half turned, without looking at the speaker. Waving the hand that was not clutching the gun, he tenderly cried: "You go back, Lorena! I'll come back, by and by!"

"Well, pa-a! What you goin' to shoot?"

"Hogs, child!"

"I'll go, too!"

"No you won't! You go just where I tell you: right in that house. And stay there, too!"

She was a strange, frail, elf-like child; tall, slender, on the debatable land between childhood and girlhood. Her threadbare, outgrown garments accentuated, in rents, the poverty sufficiently proclaimed by the naked feet and long stretch of stockingless legs. The mass of black hair hanging raggedly over her shoulders betrayed the absence of a mother's care. The pose and tone of this fresh, young creature bespoke a freedom and self-reliance rarely found in one of so few years. Her mother had passed away within her brief span of memory. Young as she was, she remembered the patient endurance, the poverty, toil, and humiliation that had been the portion of that mother in those latter days. "Befoh de wah," the colonel had been the owner of more lands and of nearly as many "subjects" as fall to the lot of some European kings. The bride he had enthroned in his ancestral home was envied by all the maidens of the land, because of the rare fortune that had come to her. No matrimonial candidate of the country could rank with the colonel. The wife never forgot this when poverty and degradation banished from the fine old house every sound of mirth and almost every trace of pardonable pride. It was her misfortune to fade with his waning fortunes. Loyally she ministered, as ser-

vant, to him who had crowned her queen of his princely home. But her fragile physique was ill-suited to rough fare and coarse work. She sank visibly and without a murmur. She would have held herself as unworthy, had she failed to conceal from him the burden under which she was crushed. The end was sudden, fortunately. She died in a superhuman effort to accomplish some menial task beyond her strength.

Only then did the colonel fully understand what her life had been. Henceforth, he was more than ever silent, and more than ever devoted to the one living child. His library, which had been his delight in days of luxury, was still his favorite retreat. But external contact with books now sufficed him. Rarely were they touched, save by the child who lay on the well-trodden carpet, striving to unravel their secrets. Her singular inspiration in drawing was his chief interest. Untaught, she had mastered the art of reproducing her childish fancies with wonderful ability. Her father was her sole companion. She was not aware that the demon drink did not always leave him in a state for ideal intercourse. Drunk or sober, she never saw the difference. And he had the grace to save his deeper potations for the night, when they would kill him more speedily and make him less offensive. Through the day, he merely drank enough to deaden himself to the memory of the galling poverty that had blasted his life. All the tenderness lavished on his wife was now centered on the child. She followed him afield; she ran beside him as he hunted the game that occasionally varied their common fare. In earliest youth she learned to light his pipe, bring his whisky, and to discharge the household duties within her limits. The toil of others was the play of this little one. Apart from the whole unheeding world, father and child clung to each other. They neither knew nor cared for other interests. Had she died, he would have avenged himself on an unjust omnipotence by rushing unbidden into the awful mysteries of the unseen. In the elementary instructions unconsciously bestowed upon the child he had never included the knowledge of a Heavenly Father. Long ago she had ceased to repeat the half-for-

gotten prayers her mother had taught her. If the name of God suggested anything to her mind, it was chiefly as a potent curse of her father's when things went wrong in the field. And so the little weed grew with its own peculiar use and beauty, neither knowing nor caring that development, fruition, and decay were the inscrutable laws illustrated in its obscure sphere.

Hearing the beloved father order her to the house, she turned without demur and busied herself with her daily duties.

Meanwhile, the stern, silent man stalked on, bearing his gun, and followed by Scipio, who reluctantly dragged behind. It was but two hundred yards to the next house, a rough log structure which stood bleak and somber in its few acres of neglected land. The poor dwelling consisted of two rooms, divided by a broad, open passage. A single mud chimney relieved the dark outline; a thin wreath of smoke arose in delicate waves in the limpid atmosphere. On this balmy day, it could only be a kitchen fire that was needed within.

The mistress of this lowly home was standing on the porch. Three rough steps led down to the littered ground. She had stepped from the room that served as kitchen, bed-room, parlor, and work-room. Glancing through the rude opening that served as a window, she had seen the colonel and his dusky attendant in their singular progress. Curiosity prompted her to leave the double rasher of bacon frying in the skillet, and made her hasten out to watch them pass. Her son, a gaunt, tall youth of twenty, collapsed, rather than crouched on the hearth to take her place. No word of explanation passed between them. His lank, yellow hair crowned him as the stubble crowns the neglected field. The coarse, homespun shirt of dubious tint served alike as coat and shirt. Certainly they are never worn together. One broken and patched suspender held his recalcitrant butternut trousers as much in place as they ever would be. A pair of suspenders was never owned in its entirety by any one of his caste. "Galluses" they called them; if originally purchased, they could only have been to divide between father and son, or near neighbors; they twain were never again one flesh.

The youth raked hotter embers on the sweet potatoes banked in the ashes that ever lay half a foot deep in the yawning fireplace. A few more minutes, and the last crisp, brown shade would touch the frying bacon. Already the hoe-cake was firmly crusted on the side presented to the live coals opposite the board on which it was spread. The primitive table with its yellow earthenware stood near the fire. The loom, with its half-finished cloth, was at one end of the room, and the bed, with its dingy appurtenances, was at the other. Half-way between these two prominent pieces, knelt the young "cracker" on the hearth. His protruded tongue was held upside down between his discolored teeth as he thrust his iron fork in the hoe-cake, the bacon, or the potatoes, to test their fitness for serving. Absorbed in this critical examination, he hardly heeded when his mother suddenly called, "Teddy!" Turning the last slice of bacon in its dripping fat, he laid the fork on the ashes and reluctantly arose to join her. As he shambled to the porch through the open hallway, once more his mother cried, "Teddy!"

No one ever called him again — not even to dinner!

The bacon sizzled angrily in its neglect; fretted and puckered up its edges, and burned away to crisp, black ashes. The hoe-cake baked through to the board, which slowly and sullenly charred and crumbled in hot resentment. The sweet



Drawn by
E. W. Kemble

LORENA.

potatoes, but now luscious with their hidden sugar exuding on the skin in soft candy, stiffened, hardened, and burned in their stifling bed, unseen and untasted.

For the colonel had kept his word as a gentleman, "by the eternal powers of mud and the State of South Carolina!"

When Teddy's mother had abandoned her cooking duties to her son, she had stepped out wearing that calico sunbonnet, without which this peculiar class of women are never seen. Sometimes strips of pasteboard serve to give those shapeless hoods an evanescent form. But these

soon collapse and dangle helplessly around the face. The next device is to wear them loosely folded over backward, and drawn forward to fall in any random plait that calico can assume. So decked, the southern "cracker," or "sand-hiller," is apparently unconscious of the lack of any other garment, at home or abroad. These bonnets are worn afield, to keep off heat, cold, sun, rain. They are worn in the house, to be prepared for any of these possibilities in their constant visits to the outer air. Whether it be a stroll to the woodpile, or to the pigsty, or to the "branch," or to the corner where the daintiest bit of clay lies hidden for the dirt-eater's delectation, the sunbonnet crowns the woman from the cradle to the grave.

So Teddy's mother stepped from the hearth to the porch, the sunbonnet that shielded her from the fire still falling around her eyes. From under its shadow she glanced at the colonel, who was now some paces from the wooden steps, Scipio respectfully halting in the rear.

"Them hogs of yours," said the colonel, adopting the vernacular familiar to Teddy's mother, "have got in my cotton again."

She looked at him in silence. To her dull mind it must have seemed unimportant where they "got," provided they got enough to fatten them for killing. It did not matter to her; she planted no cotton herself. Indeed, she planted nothing that required care.

The colonel was very quiet—frightfully so, had she been intelligent enough to see the danger signal. Then he said deliberately:

"I told you I'd blow your brains out if you let your hogs in my patch again. I'm going to keep my word. Here, Scipio, shoot that old hag! Quick, fool! before I brain you!"

"'Fore God, colonel, I kint! O Lawd! Maussa, don't mek po' Scip shoot buckra same like 'possum! You kin shoot bes', colonel! Shoot, please, maussa! Let Scip go!"

The colonel saw crimson. Purple veins distended his temples; crimson veins swelled in his eyeballs; a Niagara of curses burst from his livid lips. His hand was raised with the gun pointed at the negro who groveled at his feet.

"Teddy!" cried the motionless woman, just as she would have said, "Teddy, dig some more 'taters!"

"Take it, you fool, or I'll shoot you! Shoot and be—"

"Teddy!" monotonously repeated the mother the second time.

Teddy had shuffled out, one hand grasping his sagging trousers, the other shading his fishy eyes from the noontide glare. In a flash he had seen more than living man can boast; for the swift bullet that pierced his mother's body had sped through his yokel heart. Together they fell on the rough flooring, he already seeing with eyes that were not of the flesh; and she, poor soul, doomed to a brief space of horror and pain—a sense of awful isolation and merciful oblivion at last.

The colonel turned stoically away, mindful to take his gun from Scipio's trembling hands. He gave neither look nor regret to the dead, nor yet to the death in life lying in a long, ghastly, straggling line along the porch and gaping passage. Scipio's slouch became grotesque as he followed his master home. Fear suggested flight; but the innate instinct of the former slave recognized that the colonel was his refuge and the arbiter of his fate. His ashen face expressed abject terror and the negro irresponsibility that leaves "consequences" to higher natures; for, even in his mortal panic, he felt that he and the gun had nothing to do with the murder. It was the colonel who had "gone off!" And the colonel was the biggest man in the county: twice as big as the sheriff and the jailor. The colonel would "fix it."

Within a few steps of home the colonel halted. Scipio shifted from one foot to the other, an ebony image of degradation and helplessness. The colonel was strangely touched by this silent appeal. "Scipio," he said kindly, almost tenderly, "there will be some talk about this, and I don't want you to get in trouble. You know the cane-brake; and if you don't get victuals enough, you know where to find more. You are welcome to all you can take of mine. But cane-brakes are not always safe. Travel on; better go when you can, than run when you must. You are too good a negro to waste on a hanging, and you have done nothing to deserve hanging,—only some peo-

ple are born fools and think they can carry things as they please! It is all right; you had it to do. Don't worry about it any more than I shall. I have no money; and money won't help you. Take my flask, though; you'll need that. And be off while the coast is clear."

"Thankee, colonel! I'll go. 'Tain' like I had a fambly. I kin git up an' git. No one ain' gwine find me. Goodby, colonel! Thankee kindly!"

The colonel gazed calmly at the retreating form of the lithe negro who swung lightly along the untraced path to the cane-brake. Fresh life had clearly been awakened in his irresponsible breast by the prospect of travel and new scenes unconnected with any prospect of toil.

Lorena came dancing from the house.

"Did you shoot the pigs, pa-a?"

"Yes; both."

"Why, there was lots of them, pa-a! Two ain't shakes to what's in the patch now!"

"The worst are done for; the rest don't matter," said the colonel, indifferently.

She caught the gun to relieve him of the burden. Quickly he held it above her grasp.

"Look out; you'll get hurt!"

"O pa-a! would you take me for a pig?" she laughed.

Echoing the laugh tenderly, he led her by the hand to the place where the gun habitually rested, and then to the frugal dinner she had prepared for his return.



Dream by E. W. Kenzie

"FORE GOD, COLONEL, I KINT!"

The disheveled chicken with the disjointed leg had grown weary of the social void in its haunts. There had been no implied invitation to potato peelings and hoe-cake crumbs. The land around was too poor to offer spontaneous hospitalities of attractive character. Chickie felt that an unwonted gloom had settled on its limited prospects. At best, life held no charms for her. "Cracker" chickens are so imbued with the shiftlessness and indolence of their owners that they speedily lose even the instinct of laying eggs. Poultry can hardly be said to be "cultivated" in such circles. No energy remains. Enough chickens to pick the casual worm from the neglected path, or clear the refuse from the family living-

rooms,—enough to spare for the hawks and the wild things that prowl in the night,—these amply content the modest aspirations of the "cracker." If they ever vary the monotony of bacon and corn-bread by an occasional ration of chicken, no stranger has yet witnessed the orgy.

The frowzy little pullet fluttered up from step to step, ever pausing for a remark from the mother and son who lay supinely motionless in the rays of the sinking sun. Within the compass of her chicken life, familiar as she was with their idleness, never had she known them to be as lazy as this. Clucking and peeping in a shrill falsetto, vainly she interrogated them as to their eccentricity. Bright eyes blinking, head askew, feathers apparently developed during a stiff gale which had impelled her ever forward, she circled around and around the twain in irritating inquiry. Suddenly, a satisfactory reply seemed vouchsafed. The raw dough of the hoe-cake still clung to the dead woman's hands. Going from the hearth to her death, there had been no thought of the toilet observances all too rare among "crackers." The chicken accepted the dough as an answer to prayer for enlightenment and sustenance. It solaced itself pecking the stiff, cold fingers clean of every trace of meal. While thus actively engaged a man passed by. Attracted by the extraordinary situation, he drew near the porch. To glance, to shudder, to fly was the work of half a minute. Nor had he run far when he met another "one gal-lus" man, hands in pocket, slouch hat drawn over his eyes, sauntering toward him.

"Bill! Teddy an' his ma-a is lyin' there dead. Murdered!"

The other nodded: "Knowed it sence noon. Been awaitin' to see who's goin' to tell on the colonel."

"The colonel! Did he do it?"

"N-o-o-o! Yes! Leastways, he made Scipio do the shootin'. I was outside the fence, an' I took keer to lay low. Jim an' Pete was along. They've done gone. Reckon I'll go, too."

"Well, we won' git our heads blowed off for tellin' on Scipio!"

"Tell an' be blowed, if you've a min' to. I'm goin' to min' my own business

an' git out! I ain' fool enough to stay here an' tackle the colonel."

"Bill! you won' leave 'em there, an' all these pigs an' things a-roamin' in the night?"

"Well, you go tell the sheriff, kin' er keerless like, he better ride out this way. He'll think it means whisky, an' he'll ride fast enough. I'm off for a run up the country." And even as he spoke he strode past the frightened man. The latter sauntered to town and intimated to the sheriff that some interest might attend a ride out that road. The story was whispered as he went along. When the sheriff arrived in the fast-falling twilight, pine torches flared their banners of crimson and yellow and smoke over the dreary scene. Hemmed in by the living half circle, the faces of the dead seemed to mock and mow in answer to fearful comments and vain queries. Those who pressed too near, in their curiosity, or urged by eager neighbors, struggled back to place a barrier of life between themselves and the dead.

From his broad piazza, where he sat smoking and meditating on the events of the day, the colonel saw the fitful light and wavering forms so near. If any one wanted him they knew where to find him.

Presently the sheriff walked up the avenue and respectfully accosted him. The colonel received him as though this were his reception evening and the sheriff his first and most honored guest. The sheriff began painfully:

"Of course, colonel, it's all nonsense them fellows is talkin'; but you'll not think hard of me for askin' you—"

"Anything you like, sheriff! Take your time. Anything!"

The sheriff, with a gasp, seized the other horn of the dilemma: "They say, colonel, that Scipio killed Teddy and his ma-a yonder."

"Indeed!" said the colonel.

"Yes, sir; and I hope you don't min' our ketchin' an' hangin' him so close to your house, sir?"

"Oh! hang him, by all means, if you catch him!" said the colonel cordially.

"An' you won't take no offense, colonel? 'Most on your place; one of your hands, too! It's hard on me, colonel, to have to do things displeasin' to you! You know my duty—"

"No one knows better than I, sheriff! Do what you think best. Have a drink? Well! Here's to you sheriff!"

Drink was never far from the colonel's hand. It was only decorum with him to drink with any chance visitor, and any number of them, night or day. So with the glow of the corn whisky in their veins, he and the sheriff considerably told each other as little as the law required under the awkward circumstances. Each was ready to declare that the other was a "perfect gentleman," warranted to evince no conscientious scruples in critical moments. The colonel had merely sanctioned the lawful prosecution of Scipio,—if he could be found, and if guilt attached to him. The sheriff thanked him effusively and returned to the seething crowd around the two cadavers.

"Where's Scipio?" he called in a voice mellow with recent whisky.

Silence was only broken by the thick utterance of negro whispers. Again he called: "Come here, Scipio!"

A skinny old negress drew near.

"Law, maussa! Scipio done dead long time. 'Fo' freedom come."

"Who are you?" roared the sheriff.

"I Scipio ma-a! He ain't never live here, no how," she sturdily asserted. The black faces remained unshaken in their gravity. Some of the white men laughed aloud, even in the presence of death, at this astounding invention.

"We'll find him when we want him,"

said the sheriff curtly. "But first, we'll have an inquest. Any of you got an opinion about this here murder—if it is a murder?"

"No, sir!" "I ain't!" "'Taint no murder!" "Serve 'em right!" "Nuffin' but poo' white trash!" "Buckra." "Does de jury git pay same like de court-house?" These, simultaneously, from many voices.

"Well, all you who don't know and don't keer, step up an' form the jury."

"Mebbe dey is playin' 'possum," suggested a wary African.

"Dey's dead sure 'nuff!" replied another, stirring the old woman tentatively with his distorted shoe end.

"Who am dat say Scipio shoot 'em?"

There was an implied menace in this question which led to silence. No man cared to make himself responsible for the rumor in the face of unknown possibilities. White men stood stolidly;

negroes shifted restlessly, eager for a pretext for a row.

"If Scipio ain't here, an' no one ain't see him shoot, den Scipio ain't do it."

"Bress God! Dat so!" groaned the religious element.

"An' if Scipio ain't shoot, dey ain't shoot!" logically deducted an old ebon Solon.

"Amen! Dat so, Lawd! Black man, white man can't tell by de bullet who pull de trigger."

This audaciously irrelevant insinuation was greeted with a gasp of amazement.



THE SHERIFF.

Illustration by H. W. Kemble.

Mindful of late hospitalities, the sheriff was equal to the emergency.

"See here, Joe Saunders! an' you, Pompey; an' you fellows there! You ain't got nothin' to do with who did it, nor why it was done! That's none of your business; you've only got to say they were shot. The law does the rest."

On this simple basis, the jury was rapidly impaneled. As quickly the stereotyped verdict was formulated: "Came to their death by gunshot wounds inflicted by a person or persons unknown to the jury."

* * *

Time flies rapidly, even with those who chide its droning. But to Lorena, transformed into an ideal nymph of seventeen, time had brought no solace nor prosperity. She still roamed the woods, barefooted, driving cows which neither increased nor profited. Her father, her books, her sketches, these formed her world. Her drawing was inspired. She had no training, no theories to follow; she obtained results as the bird learns to sing, as the bee learns to make honey. On that plane, there was no room for improvement.

The colonel kept aloof from the world and sought no sympathy. But the girl's isolation weighed heavily upon him. Still more and more he resorted to the grave of his beloved wife, as though she could give him the help he dared not ask of heaven and would not ask of men. But he ever returned home bowed down by a burden that only increased with years.

Though he never spoke of it, whispers were afloat of a ghastly woman with a calico sunbonnet drawn over her eyes, who daily, in the gloaming, walked around the colonel's once beautiful home. It was not a pleasant topic; but there were those who averred that they had seen the gruesome vision. Under the seal of secrecy, scores likewise confessed that they, also, had met a woman in that peculiar guise, silent and intent on her mission. No one could question the colonel; but no one could doubt that he, also, was conscious of her presence. He never complained, whatever the mortal stress laid upon him. Year after year, he endeavored to wrest from the earth the re-

turn other men could so confidently expect,—always meeting with loss, or at best, a scanty return. And ever, in the twilight, as he sat on the wide piazza, while Lorena prepared the meager supper, his meditations were disturbed by the quiet apparition of a woman, who glided out of the surrounding shadows and came toward him. The form was the homely one so familiar to him in life. The routine never varied. Up to where he sat, then around and around the house—the face in the limp sunbonnet felt rather than seen. While he remained without, she walked her weary round; when he entered the library, she peered into each window as she passed. The monotonous tramp continued until he fled from the house. She never spoke. She seemed merely a typical "cracker," indifferent to surroundings, shielded by the calico sunbonnet that drooped over her eyes. Her face was ever turned on the colonel, though she uttered no word.

The colonel stoically accepted this as one of the incomprehensible hostilities with which an inscrutable fate had long pursued him. When the monotony became intolerable he withdrew from the piazza, where he had passed his evenings for a lifetime, and retreated to the library. But in the twilight within he still listened acutely for the familiar step on the crisp leaves or on the rain-soaked earth. He learned to shrink nervously from the faint sound and from the shadowy form that flitted past each window, the face with the unseen eyes always turned fixedly toward him. Finally, he learned to close the great shutters before sunset. It was unendurable suspense waiting for the unwelcomed form that never failed to glide by. His ear, grown doubly acute, learned all that his eyes refused to look upon. So that his soul loathed life and chose rather strangling and death. He dreaded the day; but the night was still more awful. He would leave the house when Lorena slept, and walk all night, never resting, save when he could throw himself on his wife's grave. Earth held no other refuge for him. By and by, he intuitively understood that the woman in the sunbonnet was familiar to all who passed him by. No one dared tell him; yet he knew that she was so notorious that no one cared to pass his house after

sunset. He only grew more reticent and more lonely.

After some years of stoic endurance, the strain could no longer be borne. The colonel nailed the doors and windows of his ancestral home and abandoned the place to ruin. He moved to a poor cottage on the outskirts of a large village some miles away. Isolation was still their portion. Poor as they were, he would take almost nothing from his beloved home. The associations which he sought to escape were too closely entwined with all that house contained. Nameless treasures, ancient furniture that had survived the wreck of fortune—all were left to molder in the deserted house. Lorena made no protest. The books dearest to her he transferred to the cottage. One drawing, which revealed her singular genius, he carried away with him. This erratic sketch which so impressed him, long survived him. It remains a singular memento of the family history. He wanted no other token from that once happy home. His whole mind was absorbed by the one image he sought to flee—the ghastly woman in the sunbonnet. Remorse needed no external suggestion to feed the fire that ever burned in his heart.

Far from the home he loved, in this new and humble shelter, fate might well have sent some respite to the broken and deso-

late man. But a Nemesis who never relented stalked beside him when he fled from his past, and ruthlessly she scourged him to the bone. She was neither triumphant nor aggressive. She merely conveyed the impression that somewhere from the remote depths of that limp, calico cavern, her dead eyes were fixed on him. When he could endure no more,



*Drawn by
E. W. Kemble.*

THE GHOST.

the colonel stalked in grim despair to the grave of his wife, where the woman in the sunbonnet never came. Exhaustion always brought him merciful sleep on that desolate mound of earth. The villagers whispered of the new sentry-round followed by the silent woman who watched over the colonel in the gloaming.

Five years more of this unsought and undesirable companionship proved the limit of endurance for the colonel. The last time came for him as it comes for all. Whether, that night, the eyes finally gleamed from the depths of that shabby bonnet, or whether she had summoned him to confront them elsewhere, cannot be known. Only, the night came when he kissed Lorena with more than usual tenderness, and, as she left the room with the step of a young goddess, followed her with loving gaze. Presently he passed out of the cottage for the last time. He was not alone. He carried the gun which Scipio had so ably handled on that memorable day. And as he walked down the path, clutching the gun with an iron grip, the woman in the sunbonnet followed him. Where he went—what he felt—what he saw—remains untold.

It was Lorena who traced him to her mother's grave in the early morning. Often she had found him there, oblivious of all pain and sorrow, pillowed on the only refuge he had known in weary years. She caroled on her way, through field and woods, knowing where she would find him sleeping. The voice he so loved would awaken him with no startling consciousness of new torment to be faced.

Stooping over, the more gently to arouse him, she tripped on a gun lying by his side. With a stifled cry the girl fell on the still heart of the desolate suicide.

She did not long survive him; nor did she make her moan to heaven above or earth beneath. She held aloof, as ever, from the compassion that would gladly have encircled her. For a brief space, she roamed the woods and old haunts alone, Silent, now, she lived her life of isolation, refusing all proffer of companionship or sympathy. And one morning those who pitied her from afar found her lying at the foot of a slight precipice, her faultless face with its inscrutable smile turned to the sky. One beautiful arm was thrown

over her head; the dead hand grasped trailing vines and wild flowers that delicately traced a shrine around the exquisite form. There was no indication of struggle, no evidence of pain. Was it accident? Was it design? Did a demon force or did a spirit lure her to her doom? Who knows?

They carried her to the deserted cottage, and there they stood astounded before the sketch her father had loved best of all. It was hanging just over the couch where she lay in her final sleep. Years before, in her elfin girlhood, she had with unconscious and prophetic hand sketched her young divinity that was to be and its pathetic end.

The picture represented a girl in the dawn of womanhood, of rarest beauty, lying dead at the base of the crag they had just seen. The faultless arm was tossed upward, a long spray of vines and wild flowers had encircled the radiant sylph-like form. In awe-stricken whispers they noted every strange detail of the singular coincidence. Nor did any false sympathy murmur, "Would she could have tarried with us!" If ever a hope had crossed her piteous life, it could only have gleamed from the unknown beyond the grave.

Near a well-known town of to-day, the old ancestral residence of the colonel stands deserted and shunned. No one loiters near it or cares to fathom the mysteries within. The faded carpets and dusty furniture and books may still be discerned through the slats of the window-shutters which were so firmly nailed by the colonel, when he hoped to escape the memory of the past. What was once luxury, is now the haunt of uncanny things that scurry through the obscurity and decay. No one dares penetrate within the silent house. It is the haunt of the woman in the sunbonnet, keeping watch and ward over the phantom of her murderer. Only a soul as vacuous as hers, as idle and as lonely, would brave the lion in his den! Only the tranquil ghost of the woman in the sunbonnet would venture to encounter the shade of the colonel in that moldering house! To-day he is still shrinking, yet eagerly listening for the unfaltering footstep that hounded him to suicide.



Drawn by Dan Beard.

DREAMS.—I THE WORKSHOP OF THE FUTURE.

THE CHOICE OF PARENTS



Drawn by
F. G. Attwood.

BY I. ZANGWILL.



ES," said Marindin quietly, "they may say they write for posterity, but what living author beside myself does write for posterity?"

This sounded so unlike Marindin's modesty that I wondered if the port and

the paradoxes of our Christmas dinner had got into his head at last. The veteran man of letters had talked brilliantly, *more suo*, of many things, most of all, perhaps, of his dead friend, Charles Dickens, grown to seem as old-fashioned now as Father Christmas himself, to whom indeed the author of "The Christmas Carol" was not without resemblance. Who seemed more surely to have been writing Christmas stories for posterity? we had asked ourselves musingly, as we discussed the change of temper since the days when Dickens or Father Christmas might have stood for the Time-Spirit. Many good things had Marindin said of

Ibsen, and Nietzsche, and the modern apostles of self-development, who sneered at the gospel of self-sacrifice and at all the amiable virtues our infancy had drawn from "The Fairchild Family" with its engaging references to Jeremiah XVII, 9. But now he was breaking out in a new way, and I missed the reassuring twinkle in his eye.

"I think I may, without arrogance, claim to be the one author who has really considerable influence with posterity," he went on, drawing serenely at his cigar and adjusting his right leg more comfortably across the arm of his easy-chair. "Is there any one else whom posterity listens to?"

I shifted uneasily in my own easy-chair. "What do you mean?" I inquired baldly.

"Don't you know I write for the unborn?" he counter-queried.

"But they don't read you—yet," I said, trying to smile.

"My dear fellow! Why I am the best read man in Anteland. The unborn swear by me! My publishers, Fore & Futurus, are simply rolling in promissory notes!"

"You've become a theosophist!" I cried in alarm, for that familiar twinkle in his eye had been replaced by a strange exaltation.

"And what if I have?"

"Theosophy," I cried scornfully. "Theology for atheists! The main contemporary form of the higher foolishness."

"The higher foolishness!" echoed Marindin indignantly.

"Yes, the foolishness of the fool with brains. The brainless fool fulfils himself in low ways: in alcoholic saturnalia, in salvation carnivals, in freethought hysterics, in political bombs. The higher foolishness expresses itself in aberrations of poetry and art, in table-rapping and theosophy, in vegetarianism, and in mystic calculations about the Beast."

"It is you who are the fool," he replied shortly. "Theosophy is true—that is, my form of it. Birth is but the name for the entry upon this particular form of existence."

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting.
The soul that rises with us our life's star
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar."

"The unborn preëxist, even as the dead persist; and instead of addressing posterity posthumously and circuitously, I have anticipated its verdict. I have written for the unborn direct.

I have been the apostle of the new ethics among the prenatal populations, the prophet of individualism among the unborn."

"What! You have propagated the teaching that free choice must be the battle-cry of the future, that the only genuine morality is that which is the spontaneous outcome of an emancipated individuality!"

"Precisely."

"But what has free choice to do with the unborn?"

"What has it to do? Great heavens! Everything. The battle-cry of the future will be free birth."

"Free birth!" I echoed.

"Yes—this is what I have been preaching to the unborn—the choice of their

parents before consenting to be born! Compulsory birth must be swept away. What! would you sweep away all checks upon the individuality of the individual, once he is born, would you tear asunder all the swaddling bands of our baby civilization, would you replace the rules of the nursery by the orderly anarchy of manhood and womanhood, and yet retain such an incoherent anachronism as compulsory birth, a disability which often cripples a man upon the very threshold of his career? Without this initial reform the individualism of your Ibsens and Auberon Herberts becomes a mere simulacrum, a hollow mockery. If you are to develop your individuality, it must be your own individuality that you develop, not an individuality thrust upon you by a couple of outsiders!"

"And you have preached this with success?"

"With unheard-of success."

"Unheard-of, indeed!" I muttered sarcastically.

"In *your* plane of existence!" he retorted. "In Anteland the movement has spread widely; scarcely a soul but has become convinced of the evils of compulsion in this most personal matter, and of the necessity of having a voice in its own incarnation.

And it is I, moi qui vous parle, who have sown the seeds of the revolt against our present social arrangements. Too long had parents presumed upon the ignorance and helplessness of the unborn, and upon their failure to combine. But now the great wave of emancipation which is lifting us all off our feet has reached the coming race. And soon the old ideal will be nothing but a strangled snake by the cradle of Hercules."

"Why, I never heard of such a thing in all my born days!" I cried helplessly.

"Of course not; you are more ignorant than the babe unborn. You trouble yourself about the next world, but as to what may be going on in the last world—that never enters your head. But for the tyranny of outward social forms you and



Drawn by F. G. Attwood.

"REASON CAN BE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THE GREAT WAR QUESTION."

I might have deferred our birth till a serener century. Henceforth the dreamer of dreams will have only himself to blame if he is born out of his due time and called upon to set the crooked straight. Job himself would have escaped his misfortunes if he had only had the patience to wait. In future, any one who is born in a hurry will be a born idiot."

"What! Will the unborn choose the time of birth as well as their parents?"

"One is implicated in the other. Suppose the soul wished to be the son of an American duke, naturally it would have to wait till aristocracy was developed across the Atlantic—say some time in the next century."

"I see. And is there a public opinion in Anteland that regulates private action?"

"Yes; but I have now educated it to the higher ethics. It used to be the respectable thing to be born of strangers without one's own consent, though at the bottom of their souls many persons believed this to be sheer immorality, and cursed the day they were led to the cradle and became the mere playthings of the parents who acquired them; pretty toys to be dandled and caressed, just a larger variety of doll. But all this is almost over—henceforth birth will be considered immoral, unless it is spontaneous—the outcome of an intelligent selection of parents, based on love."

"On love?"

"Yes; should not a child love its father and mother? And how can we expect it to love people it has never seen, to whom it is tied in the most brutal way, without a voice in the control of its destinies at the absolutely most important turning-point of its whole existence?"

"True; a child should love its parents," I conceded. "But is not the quiet, sober affection that springs up after birth, an affection founded on mutual association and mutual esteem, better than all the tempestuous ardors of prenatal passion that may not survive the christening?"

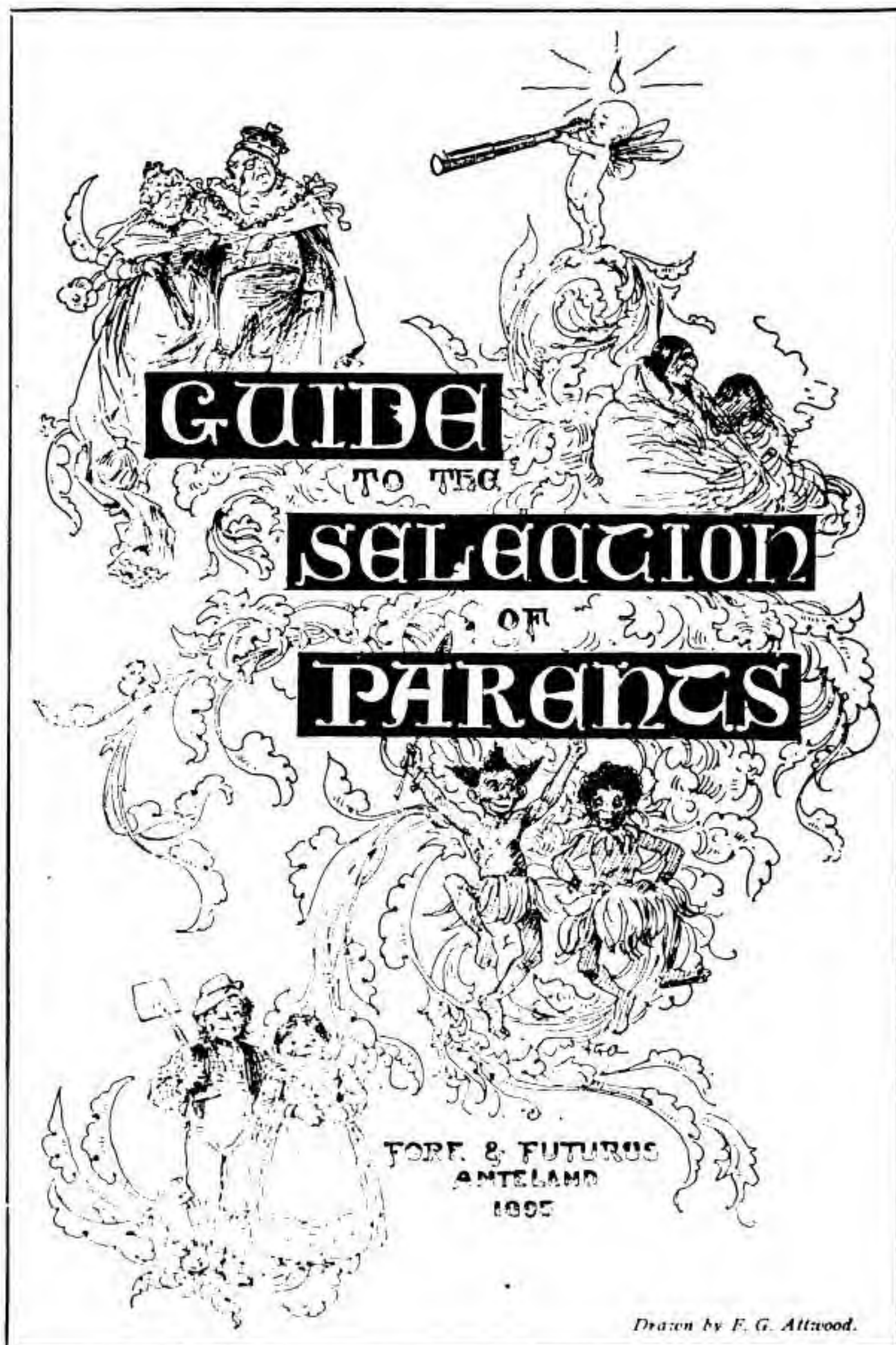
"Ah, that is the good old orthodox cant," cried Marindin, puffing out a great cloud of smoke. "What certainty is there this postnatal love would spring up? And, at any rate, a man would no longer be able to blame Providence, if he found

himself tied for life to a couple for whom he had nothing but loathing and contempt. Even the adherents of the old conception of compulsory childship begin to see that the stringency of the filial tie needs relaxation. Already it is recognized that in cases of cruelty the child may be divorced from the parent. But there is a hopeless incompatibility of temper and temperament which is not necessarily attended with cruelty. Drunkenness, lunacy, and criminality should also be regarded as valid grounds for divorce, the parent being no longer allowed to bear the name of the child it has dishonored."

"But who shall say," I asked skeptically, "that the new self-appointed generation will be happier than the old? What guarantee is there that the choice of parents will be made with taste and discretion?"

Marindin shrugged his shoulders impatiently. "Come and interview the unborn," he said, and fixed his unsmiling eye on mine, as though to hypnotize me. What happened then I shall never be able to explain. I was translated into another scale of being, into the last world in fact, and just as it is impossible to describe a symphony to a deaf mute, or a sunset to a man born blind, so it is impossible for me to put down in terms of our present consciousness the experiences I went through in that earlier prenatal stage of existence. What I perceived in Anteland must needs be expressed through the language of this world, to which in effect it bears as true and constant a relation as the vibrations of a violin-string to its music. I soon gathered that, as Marindin had claimed, his doctrines had made considerable incursions in the last world, and that, what was more surprising, in this. There seemed to be quite a considerable sect of parents spread all through Europe and America pledged to respect the rights of the unborn, and it was in coöperation with this enlightened minority—destined no doubt in time to become the universal church—that the unborn worked. The sect embraced many couples of wealth and position, and, as was to be expected, at the start there had been a rush among the unborn for millionaire parents. But it was soon discovered that birth for money was a mistake; that it too often

led to a spendthrift youth and a bankrupt gold rush was therefore abating. Birth age, and that there was not seldom a for beauty had also been popular till experience demonstrated the insubstantiability of good looks as a panoply throughout life. Gradually the real-con-



COVER DESIGN OF THE "GUIDE TO THE SELECTION OF PARENTS."

ditions of earthly happiness were coming to be understood. Unborn preachers in their unbuilt churches tried in their unspoken sermons to lead souls to the higher bodies or to save souls from precipitate incarnation. Marindin's own unwritten books sustained Paley's thesis of the essentially equal distribution of happiness among all classes, and left it for the individual soul to decide between the realities of toil and the unrealities of prosperity. Marindin took the opportunity of our presence in Anteland to pay a visit to his publishers, Fore & Futurus, of whose honesty and generosity he spoke in glowing terms.

Fore received us: he seemed to be a thorough gentleman, this unborn publisher. He showed us the design for a cover to a new "Guide to the Selection of Parents," which he was about to bring out, and which he hoped would become the standard work on the subject. I gathered that these guides were very popular as birthday presents, enabling as they did, those just about to be born to think once more before making the final plunge. The feature of the Fore & Futurus guide was the appendix of contributions from souls already born, whose mistakes might serve to benefit those still unattached.

"But how can there be a guide to such a frightful labyrinth?" I inquired curiously. "Japhet in search of a father had a light task before him compared with the selection of one. And it is not only the selection of a father, but of a mother! To take the outside variations only: the father may be handsome, good-looking, plain, or ugly; the mother may be beautiful, pretty, plain, or ugly. Any of these types of fathers may be paired with any of these types of mothers, which makes sixteen complications. Then there is complexion—fair or dark—which makes sixty-four, for you know how, by algebraic calculation, every new possibility multiplies into all the others. If one turns to mental and moral characteristics one's brain swims to think of the new complications incalculably numerous and all multiplying into the old physical combinations. Multiply, furthermore, by all the combinations arising from considerations of health, money, position, nationality, religion, order of birth whether as

first, second, or thirteenth child, and the strongest intellect reels and breaks down. Even now I have not enumerated all the possibilities; for the total would have to be doubled for the contingency of sex, since I presume birth would not be absolutely free, unless it included the right of choosing one's sex.

"To take a concrete instance of the embarrassment which free birth would bring and of the invidious distinctions that would have to be made. Which is the better lot—to be the third daughter of a nineteenth-century, healthy, ugly, penniless, clever, middle-aged, moral, free-thinking German baron by a beautiful, rich, stupid, plebeian Spanish dancer, with one child by a previous marriage, and a tendency to consumption; or the second son of a twentieth-century American duke, unhealthy, uncultured, handsome, chaste, ritualist, elderly and poor, by an English heiress, ugly, low-born, low church, ill-bred, intellectual, with a silly and only semi-detached mother? But this would be a problem of unreal simplicity, bearing as much relation to actuality as the first law of motion to the flight of a bird, for your choice would lie not between one pair and another but among all possible pairs."

"All existing pairs possible to you," corrected Marindin. "People manage to choose husbands and wives, though according to your computation the whole of the opposite sex would have to be examined and selected from. In practice the choice is narrowed down to a few individuals. So with the choice of parents—most are already snapped up, monopolized, or mortgaged, or contracted for, and you have either to choose from the leavings or postpone your birth, and bide your time a century or two. But the problem is greatly simplified by the P. C."

"What is the P. C.?" I murmured.

"The Parental Certificate, of course. Throughout the terrestrial branch of our sect no one is eligible for parentage who does not possess it. It is given only to those who have passed the P. D., or Parents' Degree examination, and supplements the old P. L., or Parents' License, which was openly bought and sold."

"And the qualifications?"

"Oh, very elementary. The candidate is required to pass an exam. (both written

and oral) in the training of the young, and to be certified of sound mind in sound body. The P. L. itself has been transformed into a license to keep one, two, or more children, according to means."

"You see our guide deals merely with the great typical pairs," explained the publisher. "What Aristotle did for logic, our author has done for birth. He only pretends to give general categories. Aristotle could not guarantee a man shall reason properly, nor can any individual be infallibly inspired to the wisest choice of parentage. Of course the photographs of parents are of great service to the unborn who are thinking of settling down."

"How do they get to see them?"

"Oh, as soon as a couple passes the P. D. and receives the P. C., they appear in the illustrated papers—especially the ladies' papers. 'Graduates of the Week' is the heading. And then there is the P. T.—the Pathological Tree."

I looked at the publisher in perplexity.

"Gracious! I forget this is your first visit to Anteland," he said apologetically. "Look! Here are some P. T.'s my lawyer has just been looking over for me, the property of parents whose advertisements for children I have been answering. My friends are rather anxious I should incarnate."

I surveyed the parchment roll with curiosity. It was a tree, on the model of a genealogical tree, but tracing the hygienic record of the family.

"In our sect," said Marindin impressively, "it will become the pride of the family to have an unblemished pedigree, and any child who gets himself born into such a family will do so with the responsibility of carrying on the noble tradition of the house and living up to the sanitary scutcheon—*santé oblige*. When children begin to be fastidious about the families they are born into, parents will have to improve or die childless. And, as the love of offspring springs eternal in the human breast, this will have an immense influence upon the evolution of the race to higher goals. I do not know any force of the future on which we can count more hopefully than on the refinement resulting from the struggle for offspring and the survival of the fittest to be parents. Undesirable families will become extinct. The unborn will subtly mold the born

to higher things. Childlessness will become again what it was in the Orient: a shame and a reproach."

"Yes," assented the publisher, smoothing out the P. T.'s. "The old unreasoned instinct and repugnance will be put on a true basis when it is seen that childlessness is a proof of unworthiness—a brand of failure."

"As old-maidhood is, less justly, to-day," I put in.

"Quite so," said Marindin eagerly. "In their anxiety to be worthy of selection by posterity, parents will rise to heights of health and holiness of which our sick generation does not dream. If they do not—woe to them! They will be remorselessly left to die out without issue. The change has begun; our sect is spreading fast. In the course of a century or two, physical and mental deformities will vanish from the earth." His eye flashed prophetic fire.

"So soon?" I said, with a skeptical smile.

"How could they survive?" Marindin inquired, scathingly.

"Is it likely any of us would consent to be born hunchbacks?" broke in the publisher, "or to enter families with hereditary gout? Would any sane Antelander put himself under the yoke of animal instincts or tendencies to drink? Ah, here is a bibulous grandfather!" and he tossed one of the P. T.'s disdainfully aside, though I observed that the old gentleman in question had been an English earl.

"But, Mr. Fore," I protested, "will all the unborn attach such importance to the pathological pedigree as you do? What power will make them train up their parents in the way they should go?"

"The greatest power on earth," broke in Marindin, "the power of selfishness—backed by education. Enlightened selfishness is all that is needed to bring about the millennium. The selfishness of to-day is so stupid. Let the unborn care only for their own skins and they will improve the parents, and be well brought up themselves by the good parents they have selected."

"But come now, Mr. Fore," I said. "The new system has been partially at work, I understand, for some time. Do you assure me, on your word of honor as



MARINDIN AND THE PUBLISHER.

an unborn publisher, that the filial franchise has been invariably exercised wisely and well?"

"Of course not," interrupted Marindin. "Haven't I already told you there has been much fumbling and experimentation, some souls being born for money, and some for beauty, and some for position. But pioneers must always suffer—for the benefit of those who come after."

"Certainly there have been rash and improvident births," admitted the publisher. "Hasty births, premature births, secret births, morganatic births, illegitimate births, and every variety of infelicitous intrusion upon your planet. The rash are born too early, the cautious too late; some even repent on the very brink of birth and elect to be still-born. But in the majority of cases birth is the outcome of mature deliberation, a contract entered into with a full sense of the responsibilities of the situation."

"But what do you understand by illegitimate birth?" I asked.

"The selection of parents not possessing the P. C. There are always eccentric spirits who would defy the dearest and most sacred institutions organized by society for its own protection. We are gradually creating a public opinion to discountenance such breaches of the law, and such perils to the commonweal, subversive as they are of all our efforts to promote the general happiness and holiness. Even in your uncivilized communities," continued the publisher, "these unlicensed and illegitimate immigrants are stamped with lifelong opprobrium and subjected to degrading disabilities,

how much infamy should then attach to them when the sin they are born in is their own!"

"A lesser degree of illegitimacy," added Marindin, "is to be born into a family already containing the full number it is licensed for. This happens particularly in rich families, introductions into which are naturally most sought after. It is still a moot point whether the birth should be legitimized on the death of one of the other children."

"But it is the indirect results that I look forward to most," he went on after a pause. "For example, the solution of Nihilism in Russia."

"What has that to do with the unborn?" I asked, quite puzzled.

"Don't you see that the Czarship will die out?"

"How so?"

"No one will risk being born into the imperial family. I should say that birth within four degrees of consanguinity of the Czar would be so rare that it would come to be regarded as criminal."

"Yes, that and many another question will be solved quite peacefully," said the publisher. "You saw me reject a noble grandfather: the growth of democratic ideals among us must ultimately abolish hereditary aristocracy. So, too, the question of second marriages and the deceased wife's sister may be left to the taste and ethical standards of the unborn, who can easily, if they choose, set their faces against such unions."

"You see the center of gravity would be shifted to the prenatal period," explained Marindin, "when the soul is

more liable to noble influences. The moment the human being is born it is definitely molded; all your training can only modify the congenital cast. But the real potentialities are in the unborn. While there is not life there is hope. When you commence to educate the child it is already too late. But if the great forces of education are brought to bear upon the unformed, you may bring all high qualities to birth. Think, for instance, how this will contribute to the cause of religion. The unborn will simply eliminate the false religions by refusing to be born into them. Persuade the unborn, touch *them*, convert *them*! You, I am sure, Mr. Fore," he said, turning to the worthy publisher, "would never consent to be born into the wrong religion!"

"Not if hell-fire was the penalty of an unhappy selection," replied Mr. Fore.

"Of course not," said Marindin. "Missionaries have always flown in the face of psychology. Henceforward, moreover, Jews will be converted at a period more convenient for baptism."

"We hope to mold politics, too," added the publisher, "by boycotting certain races and replenishing others."

"Yes," cried Marindin, "it is my hope that by impregnating the unborn with a specific set of prejudices, they might be induced to settle in particular countries, and I cannot help thinking that patriotism would be more intelligent when it was voluntary: self-imposed from admiration of the ideals and history of a particular people. Indeed this seems to me absolutely the only way in which reason can be brought to bear on the great war question, for in lieu of that loud eloquence of Woolwich infants there would be exercised the silent pressure of the unborn, who could simply annihilate an undesirable nation or decimate an offensive district. Surely this would be the most rational way of settling the ever-menacing Franco-Prussian quarrel."

"I observe already a certain anti-Gallic feeling in Anteland," put in the publisher. "A growing disinclination to be born in France, if not a preference for being made in Germany. But these things belong to *la haute politique*."

"My own suspicion is," I ventured to suggest, "that there is a growing disin-

clination to be born anywhere, and this new privilege of free choice will simply bring matters to a climax. Your folks, confronted by the endless problem of choosing their own country and century, their own family and their own religion, will dilly-dally, and shilly-shally, and put off birth so long that they will never change their condition at all. They will come to the conviction that it is better not to be born; better to bear the evils that they know than fly to others that they know not of. What if the immigration of destitute little aliens into our planet ceased altogether?"

Marindin shrugged his shoulders, and there came into his face that indescribable look of the hopeless mystic.

"Then humanity would reach its goal: it would come naturally and gently to an end. The euthanasia of the race would be accomplished, and the purified planet, cleansed of wickedness at last, would take up its part again in the chorus of the spheres. But like most ideals, I fear this is but a pleasant dream." Then, as the publisher turned away to replace the P. T.'s in a safe, he added softly: "Intelligence is never likely to be so widely diffused in Anteland that the masses would fight shy of birth. There would always be a sufficient proportion of unborn fools left who would prefer the palpabilities of bodily form to the insubstantialities of prenatal existence. Between you and me, our friend the publisher is extremely anxious to be published."

"And yet he seems intelligent enough," I urged.

"Ah, well, it cannot be denied that there are *some* lives decidedly worth living, and our friend Fore will probably bring up his parents to the same profession as himself."

"No doubt there would always be competition for the best births," I observed, smiling.

"Yes," replied Marindin sadly. "The struggle for existence will always continue among the unborn."

Suddenly a thought set me agarin. "Why, what difference can the choice of parents make after all?" I cried. "Suppose you had picked my parents—you would have been I, and I should be somebody else, and somebody else would be you. And there would be the three of

us, just the same as now," and I chuckled aloud.

"You seem to have had pleasant dreams, old man," replied Marindin. But his voice sounded strange and far-away.

I opened my eyes wide in astonishment, and saw him buried in an easy-chair, with a book in his hand and two tears rolling down his cheeks.

"I've been reading of Tiny Tim while you snoozed," he said apologetically.



Drawn by F. G. Attwood.

CHRISTMAS.

RHYMED ACROSTICS.

BY WILL HILL.

CHRISTMAS, come and bring again
 Holly-berries all aglow,
 Roving minstrel's merry strain,
 Ivy-wreath and mistletoe,
 Sweet reunions, friendly faces,
 Tender thoughts; bring, too, for me
 My lady's kiss and fond embraces,
 And thy poet I will be,
 Singing oft in measures soft of love and thee!

Christmas, monarch of the year,
 Haste and spread thy wonted cheer:
 Rock the steeples, bid each bell
 Iron-tongued thy tidings tell:
 Sorrow strangle, nurse content,
 Tune all hearts to merriment!
 Mirth is brief, and care will wait
 At the threshold soon or late,
 So scare him out with song and shout beyond the gate!

THE DISCOVERY OF ALTRURIA.

NARRATIVE OF SIR ROBERT HARTON.

BETWEEN 1881 and 1892 I had expended my income and time in African exploration. Not being solicitous of fame for my labors, my work—of no great importance in its way—had been done without attracting the attention of the press. I mention this since the wide comment which has been made upon nearly all African exploration would make it seemingly impossible for any African traveler to be engaged for so many years in such work without coming under public notice.

Towards the close of 1892 I visited the United States, to look after some investments which had become involved by the panic then beginning to affect seriously many enterprises. After a hard day's work, I bought a copy of *THE COSMOPOLITAN* at the Brevoort House newsstand and, returning to my room, soon became interested in the experiences of the Altrurian Traveler, contributed to this magazine by Mr. W. D. Howells. When I had finished the instalment of the month, I found myself involuntarily thinking of the story I had heard told by an Arab chief one night in camp on the Upper Congo. The Arab, who had been a small sheik in his native country, but had for many years been employed by one explorer or another, believed that on the extreme headwaters there existed a people numbering more than twenty millions of souls, the frontiers of whose nation were kept guarded night and day, permitting no one to pass in or out.

The story told by the Arab was that his brother had succeeded in crossing the guard stations in disguise, while he remained in camp on the lower waters of the mountain stream which flowed out of this mysterious country. For more than three weeks he awaited his brother's return. One day a curiously shaped bottle came floating down the stream. Swimming out and bringing it safely to shore, he found that the bottle contained a piece of white cloth upon which his brother had written, telling of capture after penetrating the

country of a strange people, at once numerous and powerful. He had been arrested and condemned to life confinement. He advised the sheik not to seek to recover him, as the precautions were so complete that any attempt would certainly end in disaster, that his imprisonment, while secure, was not unpleasant, that he expected to be well treated, and that his only unhappiness was in parting forever from brother and family. The letter then went on to give an account of his surroundings, and, amongst other things, he wrote that poverty and its attendant evils were almost unknown to this people.

The Arab had been my guide and companion during so many months that it was impossible not to place the highest confidence in his sincerity. The many talks over our camp-fires stimulated my belief in the existence of such a people, as well as my curiosity to see them for myself. But upon returning to New York, I found that, through a series of misfortunes, my income from the American properties in which I had invested had been so seriously crippled as to be no longer sufficient to meet the expenses of further expeditions. Not desiring to abandon so fascinating a field, I had been resolving in my mind various questions as to the future, when the copy of *THE COSMOPOLITAN* came by chance into my hands.

After finishing Mr. Howells' chapter, I sat in revery for some minutes. If half the Arab had written were true then there must be a real Altruria in existence: not a mythical land of dreams and idealisms, but a tangible, actual people, with carefully studied laws and an organization for the purposes of society perfected to the highest degree. What a thing it would be for the world at large if one could find this people and bring back their laws, customs, and the history of their evolution, so that less progressive peoples might benefit from such advanced civilization! *THE COSMOPOLITAN* had recently sent an expedition around the

NOTE.—In the December *COSMOPOLITAN* will be begun "A BRIEF HISTORY OF ALTRURIA," compiled at the capital of Altruria by Sir Robert Harton, under the direction and with the assistance of Mar-Nol-Fay, one of the governors of Virland, from the histories and records of that country.

world. Why should not this magazine be glad to send me, an explorer, to the interior of Africa upon a mission of this importance?

The next morning, the 25th of November, I called at the office of THE COSMOPOLITAN and sent in my card. While stopping over in London, a friend had been kind enough to offer me a letter of introduction to the editor, and I had accepted his courtesy without any distinct expectation of making use of it, knowing the many demands made upon the time of the average editor. It served me in good stead, and I received a cordial greeting. After a few commonplaces I referred to Mr. Howells' work and told the story of the Arab. I must say that it was received by the editor with some of that incredulity which grows upon people who see many visitors, and are compelled to listen to not a few improbable stories in the course of a year. But my earnestness turned the scale now, just as the conviction of the Arab had forced belief with me. My credentials were such as to leave no doubt as to my standing, and before I took my departure I had been invited to dine by THE COSMOPOLITAN'S editor at his club on the following day. When I arrived at the club I found that my host was evidently in a less skeptical mood than at our first meeting and, to make a long story short, it was arranged that I should set out for Africa early in December, fully equipped to enter upon an expedition of two or three years' duration if necessary.

* * *

Four months after sailing from New York I found my Arab guide and hunter camped far up on the Congo, with a dozen well-trained and trusty fellows, five of whom had been with us on a previous expedition. The remainder were men picked up by him with care, selected for their good health, intelligence, and trustworthy qualities. I had communicated to my faithful Arab my desire to learn for myself whether the story taken from the bottle were really true, and he in turn was more than anxious to set out upon an expedition that promised not only to be full of exciting incident,

but possibly to restore to him his brother. He had formed a distinct outline of campaign, and, as we made our way up country, its details were carefully discussed until never was plan more complete or more entire in its every particular.

There could be little doubt that sentinels were continually kept on outpost duty on the frontiers of what I had come to call Altruria, and that when strangers arrived within dangerous limits they were met by a body of seeming savages and escorted back. No matter how large the party, they were always outnumbered and forced to retreat. It would, therefore, be useless to hope for any entrance except by stratagem, and the undertaking would be placed at great disadvantage if our party approached sufficiently near to make its presence known to these outposts.

Almost every stage of the journey was a difficult one, not unfrequently beset by vivid dangers, and on two occasions the escape from surroundings promising for a time to be overwhelming, was almost miraculous. Eight months were consumed in this way, until finally my guide announced one morning that, with nightfall, we should reach a camp which must be the end of our open progress. From that point on I must make my journey alone, by stealth, and hope to reach its end only by concealment so careful as to deceive a most vigilant guard.

Two or three days were now spent in rest and the final preparations. When in England, I had made a study of the most strengthening foods, prepared so as to occupy the smallest possible space, and a knapsack was packed containing a weight of twenty pounds, calculated to support life, if necessary, for more than a month. Besides this, I was supplied with the necessary arms, as well as a finely woven blanket, and a large square of dark silk waterproof cloth, similar to that used in the finest ladies' mackintoshes.

Setting out at nightfall and working my way cautiously up stream, I kept several miles north of the bed of the mountain river, resolving not to be seen by any one. As day dawned, I secured a supply of fresh water, and hid myself under a dense growth of bush. The next night

the same precautions were observed, and for more than a week I made substantial progress. Not daring to build fires, I subsisted entirely upon the contents of my knapsack, eked out by a few berries which I had been able to gather.

On the eighth day out, while lying concealed, I heard a creaking of leaves and branches, and in a moment more a tremendous hound, larger than a Great Dane, broke through the underbrush. I had barely drawn my revolver from its holster when he was upon me, and he had almost crushed the bones of my left arm before a bullet laid him dead with my arm still in his grasp. As hurriedly as possible with my wounded arm, I seized my knapsack and arms, and started to crawl through the underbrush. Before going fifty feet, I was surrounded by a party of savages clad and decorated after the fashion of that region of the Congo. The shouts and cries made me think for a moment that my end had come, but recovering some presence of mind, I quickly perceived that, excepting their attire and decorations, there was nothing very savage about my captors. Their skins were painted, and it soon became evident that they had no intention of killing me. Apparently they only wished to frighten. Having gotten possession of my arms, they placed me in the midst of the party and marched down stream for many miles. That night there was an effort made to work upon my fears, but I had by this time become entirely certain that these were men under disguise, and that they were the outposts of which I had heard. One of the party being sick was carried in a rough litter. Happening to be near him, just as night was closing in, I noticed in his breech-clout a small cylinder of paper which had evidently worked up from its pocket under the motion of the litter, and resolved upon its capture. As we were still traveling after the night had fairly set in, I soon found myself in a position where I would be safe from detection. Reaching stealthily into the litter,



SIR ROBERT HARTON.

before any one could observe my purpose, I secured the paper and concealed it in an inner pocket.

With senses on the alert, I studied carefully every feature and gesture. The language of the pretended savages was strange, but, nevertheless, contained many words which were English in sound. At the end of two days' march, one of the party, in a few broken sentences, told me that if I would travel back to the coast, I would be allowed to go unharmed, but any attempt to return up the river would be immediately met with death. They then dismissed me, and I made my way back as best I could. Before I arrived in camp my arm was in such thoroughly bad condition that weeks were required until the healing was complete.

Naturally my intention was not weakened by this failure of the first campaign. It seemed pretty certain that if I could succeed in passing the frontier, I should be well rewarded for any risk incurred. This impression was confirmed by an examination of the paper which had been taken from the litter. Upon it were written characters of no language with which I was familiar; but in addition to the writing there was a map of no mean order of drawing. Streams were distinctly shown, and peculiar lines, which

were evidently topographical representations of altitudes. There were others showing mountain paths and trails.

The clues contained in the map were quickly traced out, and a few days' advance enabled me to get my full bearings from it. With this key to the roads and trails of the frontier, I felt that I should be able to avoid the outposts with some certainty, and my conclusions proved correct. Twenty-five miles from the first town shown on the map, I was able to perceive from my hiding place, by the aid of a field-glass which I carried, a range of apparently impassable mountains. Along their base a palisade of broken rock rose in a sheer precipice. Only at one point was there a fissure, and through this came the stream, the course of which I had been following. The simplest reasoning showed that the natural entrance would be carefully guarded, and that unless some point could be found further north or south at which the ridge might be scaled, my hopes were at an end.

For half a day I lay on the edge of the undergrowth, carefully studying through my field-glass the mountain range which rose at a distance of a few miles from my post of observation. To the south there seemed to be one absolutely continuous wall, rising fully a thousand feet above the valley. To the north, about ten miles away, the wall seemed less regular, and in places a few stunted trees could be detected along its sides. I came to the conclusion that, with nightfall, it would be best to go to the north, travel not more than four or five miles before halting, and study again through my glass the features of this formidable barrier. The next day revealed nothing that seemed to promise and another night changed my position to a point several miles farther on. The crest of the low hills which I had been following at this point came up within a mile of the mountain, so that at daybreak I found myself at a point of decided vantage and was able to perceive distinctly every crevice. Off to the north the rock wall seemed to be straighter and higher than ever, but just opposite to where I lay, the broken front, with its scattering growth, to which I have already alluded, opened possibilities of scaling the heights.

As soon as darkness had settled down, I crept carefully across the valley, and,

filling my canteen with a fresh supply of water, began the slow ascent. A hundred times I followed seeming possibilities, only to find further progress absolutely barred. But many trials brought their advances, and before morning I had gained more than six hundred feet of height and lay safely ensconced behind a large boulder, so concealed that I could move at will without danger of being perceived, either from the rocks above or the valley below.

It is needless to recount the difficulties which presented themselves before the highest range of this mountain chain—more than nine thousand feet above the valley—was reached. But when the final step brought me to the summit, all fears and anxieties were instantly forgotten before the magnificent panorama which lay unrolled almost at my feet. The vast mountain park which had at one period been the bed of a lake, stretched away in endless distance, with a southern border fringed by a chain of snowy peaks that glinted and receded in alternating sunlight and shadow, until the eye was left in doubt whether it were reality or veritable fairyland. As I looked over the crest of the mountain, the sun from behind fleecy clouds fell in widely diverging rays, and a trifling haze which filled the atmosphere lent to the plain such a glorious splendor as to cause me almost to doubt its reality. Every acre of the land seemed covered with the greenest of vegetation. A thousand villages were the centers of agricultural and manufacturing life, while conspicuous in the distance rose two cities; and yet they seemed scarcely to be cities, but rather palaces, each covering two or three square miles, with courts, and lakes, and malls, and open spaces, the architecture of each city being a harmonious whole rising toward the center to great heights, but presenting none of that ragged, spasmodic, violently contrasting, and utterly incongruous architecture so familiar to the people of London and New York.

The walls of these palaces, under the slanting sunlight, took on hues of softest grays, and blues, and purples. It was such a scene as the eye could feast upon forever, every minute changing under the shifting shadows,—every moment displaying new wonders and beauties.



Drawn by Thomas Moran, from a sketch by Sir Robert Hutton.

THE FIRST NIGHT'S CAMP ON THE MOUNTAIN.

The streams which poured down from the mountains toward the river seemed like threads of quicksilver, and, darting with bee-like quickness were an endless number of little cars, their tracks apportioned with mathematical exactness over the surface of the park.

Fascinated by the paradise beneath me, it was a long time before I returned to the practical problem of making my way to the larger of the two cities, which I rightly judged, as I afterward found, to be the capital of Virland. I knew nothing of the people. Neither their language nor

customs, not even their costume was familiar to me, for I felt sure that the guard in the outer territory purposely dressed to give the impression that they were savages of the tribes belonging to the Upper Congo.

It was evident that I could not make my appearance among this people without insuring instant arrest, and yet it was very necessary that I should reach one of the large cities before being apprehended. Descending the mountain as far as it seemed safe, I then awaited darkness, and finally ventured out on the plain.

The night was by good fortune overcast, and by midnight I was able to move in comparative security across the fields. Venturing under cover of the darkness toward a large outlying building, lighted here and there by electric lamps, I found its doors unguarded, and after carefully peering through a number of the windows to see if any one were on duty, I took the risk of entering. The building was a mill for grinding flour. At one end was a very large pneumatic tube for shipping the product to another point. It was evident that pneumatic carriage, which had been introduced in a small way in London, Berlin, Paris, and even Philadelphia, was here in full service for the transportation of freight. I will not undertake to describe the surprise which I felt at the many novel surroundings amongst which I found myself. Later on I hope to give a description of the mechanical devices and highly developed methods of transportation.

While intent upon the examination of some engravings which hung on the walls, I detected a sound on one of the upper floors and looked hastily about for a place of concealment. A row of pneumatic cylinders stood loaded on a side rail, apparently ready for despatch the first thing in the morning. Several others had not been filled. Slipping my knapsack from my shoulders, arranging it as a pillow, and hastily jumping into the car standing next the loaded ones, I closed the door, which locked automatically. This was accomplished not a moment too soon, for at the snap of the lock a man made his appearance. Through a crevice I could obtain a good view of him as he came forward to within a few feet of the cylinder in which I lay. He looked around curiously, evidently having heard the noise made by the quick closing of the door, and wondering whence it proceeded.

It suddenly occurred to me that I had placed myself in a position which involved either serious bodily jeopardy or immediate arrest. If I attracted attention so as to escape from my car, I would be forthwith taken into custody. If I remained in my present position I would be shot forward into an unknown space under a pressure that might be fatal to life, or to a destination of which

I knew nothing. I had no knowledge of the conditions which would accompany pneumatic transit, and it was but natural that I should feel considerable anxiety as to the outcome.

Nevertheless, as is often the case, especially when we reason about the affairs of another world, it seemed better to encounter the uncertain danger, than to face the immediate one. Presently, reasoning over the problem, I came to the conclusion that, very likely, the pneumatic tube would lead to one of the great cities, and that the chances of a mishap on the way were, after all, not great, and if I remained patiently where I was, my cylinder would probably be sent in the morning with the others through the tube to some great receiving warehouse at the capital.

The hours were long before there was any sign of life in the mill, and finally I dropped off into a doze. I was awakened by the sound of voices. The workmen had evidently arrived, but their language was in a tongue unknown to me. I could perceive that the cylinders adjoining mine were being loaded, and that the one in which I rested was evidently counted among those which had been filled the night before. Presently there was a slight click, the little line of railway on which the cylinders rested trembled slightly, and the foremost of the packages was shot into the opening. I counted "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven"—another cylinder shot into the opening—then a third was despatched, and a fourth. There were now but two cylinders between me and the pneumatic tube, and I had quick visions of boyhood days, of faces at home. Many recollections came vividly. But even if I had wished to escape, the time was now too short. The pneumatic lock clicked again. I felt my cylinder being pushed forward, and in a second more I knew that it was being carried through space with frightful velocity. Not many minutes, however, elapsed, before the motion gradually decreased, and with a sharp sound the cylinder passed out of the tube and came to a stop upon a double line of rails similar to that from which it had been started. Through the interstices of the car lid I could perceive that I was in a large storehouse, where a number of men were engaged in shifting the contents of pack-

Drawn by Thomas Moran, from sketches by Sir Robert Hartig. FIRST VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT



ages. Presently a crane was attached to both ends of my cylinder and I was swung over to a large table. A key was turned in the lock, and as the lid of the cylinder was thrown back an involuntary exclamation of surprise burst from the workman. Struggling to my feet, I quickly scrambled out, to the increased astonishment of those gathered about. I addressed myself to them in English, requesting to be taken to the city authorities. No one present seemed capable of understanding my words; but a messenger was sent off and, after a brief wait, there arrived an official who spoke English, but with such an accent as I had never even suspected the alphabet of suggesting.

It seemed that I had been sufficiently fortunate to arrive at the capital of Virland, and that the board of governors, in which was vested the authority of the state, was in session. My most sanguine hopes were thus more than realized. As I accompanied the official toward the executive offices, I found strange sights to engage attention on every hand. But my mission was growing in importance, and I felt sure that the result concerned not merely my own personal interests, but those of many human beings. It was evident that I was in the midst of a people of a superior civilization, whose experiments in government must prove of great value even to the most forward of European and American nations. It was not merely my own life which was at stake, but, in a measure, the happiness of millions of my fellow-countrymen, and as I went, I gathered courage to make a supreme effort in favor not only of life and liberty, but of being permitted to carry back with me such facts regarding Virland, its people, its history, and the present government, as might be of service to England and the people of two continents.

The administration building of the government proved to be a palace in the strictest sense of the word. Approached from a broad park, the structure rose in a series of terraces, each terrace forming a story of the main palace building, and rising one above the other in a succession of indescribably graceful forms until, at the height of nearly a thousand feet, four beautiful towers sprang up at the four

corners of a hanging garden which must have been fully an acre in extent. My guide offered me the choice of climbing the exterior staircases, or going up by elevator from the great central rotunda. I was in a poor mood to admire beauties of nature or architecture, no matter how wonderful, and so chose the latter. This rotunda proved to be nearly a quarter of a mile in diameter, and over its high ceiling rested the hanging garden to which I have already referred. The interior of the dome was broken by tiers of galleries alternating with stretches of daylight admitted through long glass windows which could be quickly removed in pleasant weather and automatically closed themselves at the approach of a storm. Numberless elevators, located around the dome, ascended, not perpendicularly, but on the lines of the dome's circumference, giving access either to the galleries or to the corridors of the executive offices which on every hand surrounded the rotunda. I found later on that this rotunda was the chief amusement and music hall of Virland—although numerous smaller ones were located in the various communities. It had seats for two hundred thousand people, and its acoustic properties were so perfect that a violin solo could be heard with equal distinctness from every seat. Twelve hundred feet in diameter, its immense size was more than counterbalanced by its peculiar proportions. One day the floor would be a green sward upon which took place the intercollegiate athletic contests. Another day a theatrical stage, so arranged as to disappear at the end of each act, the curtain being moved horizontally instead of vertically, was substituted for the greensward—a new stage with changed settings coming up just adjoining the spot where the first had disappeared.

Taking the nearest elevator, we shot rapidly upward until perhaps seven or eight hundred feet above the ground, where we alighted in a large corridor, down which we walked toward a perspective of Corinthian columns. I was escorted by my guide to an anteroom and left in charge of a secretary, while he went to lay my request for an audience before the board of governors. More than half an hour elapsed before my escort returned, some light refreshments having

been brought to me on a tray in the meanwhile, the attendant exhibiting great courtesy and in no way showing any curiosity. Finally the official returned and carried me with him to the council-room.

The human countenance represents keenly the passions which lie beneath. I have at all times found faces the most interesting of studies. I have frequently had occasion to meet men holding public office, not only in my own country, but in the United States and France. There is not much difference in the type of public man in the three countries. A good deal of vanity, a good deal of a certain quality of nerve, a good deal of confidence in his own ability, and just as much selfishness as is necessary to give a good stout kick to the ladder which has brought success; also, as a rule, a willingness to sacrifice the public interests in favor of private advantage. Shrewd, sharp, determined, and unscrupulous, by these qualities they have achieved success. As I entered the council-chamber, seven men of dignified mien rose easily and bowed in response to the introduction. The impression they made upon me was a very strong one. Perfect self-possession and corresponding dignity, a blending of firmness and courtesy, an utter absence of self-thought—these were the characteristics which impressed me. I felt at once that my fate was in the hands of men of high character, who would be guided by no other motives than those of public interest, and I gained courage accordingly.

In requesting me to state the object of my coming, they asked that I should speak very slowly and distinctly. It might thus be possible to dispense with the services of an interpreter, as all the members of the board of governors had studied my language, though none of them had ever heard it spoken by an Englishman. In fact, a modified form of English had been the language of Virland prior to 1870. As briefly as possible I reviewed the distressing conditions which prevail in so many countries of Europe, and even in the happiest of our civilizations as represented in England and America. I stated what I had heard of the reforms which a superior civilization had evolved in Virland, and that my trip had been undertaken with a view to

making a study of the laws and customs of their country, and of carrying back to my own land a report upon these advanced social conditions. Knowing very well that my return to England, if not my life itself, depended upon eloquence, I used every argument likely to appeal to their sense of humanity.

But when I had finished, the president of the board addressed me in no very promising terms. It had been a cardinal principle of their government since they arrived as colonists in 1642, to allow absolutely no intercourse of any kind whatsoever with other countries or peoples. The most unremitting precautions had been taken to this end. It was the general belief that their very existence as a nation depended upon their keeping all knowledge regarding their state from the outer peoples. Any attempt to break this seclusion was the one capital offense known to their laws. If an intelligent man, such as I seemed to be, were permitted to remain alive after gaining a knowledge such as I had become possessed of, it would be a constant menace to the welfare of the people. If I had been ingenious enough to overcome the difficulties of entrance, I would doubtless be equally skilful in making my exit even from the closest confinement. Death seemed to be the only alternative. While they were opposed to the taking of human life, yet, in this case, where escape would place the happiness of millions in jeopardy, it would, undoubtedly, be necessary to conform with the strictest requirements of the law. Nevertheless, the action need not be hasty, and I would be placed under a close guard. I received assurances that final sentence would not be pronounced until at least a week had elapsed.

Looking around the table, I could perceive on all sides expressions of regret at my fate; at the same time this very pity was the surest sign that these intelligences were not to be diverted by any mere individual preference, and that the greatest good of the greatest number was, with them, the sole controlling motive.

Bowed from their presence, I was conducted to a large, well-lighted chamber of the palace. A guard of young men had already taken possession of the adjoining apartment, through the open door of which I could be kept constantly in view.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ALTRURIA.

NARRATIVE OF SIR ROBERT HARTON.

EARLY the following morning, a note was brought asking me to breakfast with the Senior Governor. I hurriedly finished my bath, and was carried off by two of my guards to a still higher level of the palace where I found Mar-Nol-Fay awaiting me. The breakfast-table was laid in a sort of turret, the sides of which were composed entirely of heavy plate-glass. The turret projected from one of the corners of the building, commanding a view of the plain below even more extensive than that which had greeted me from the mountain-top, and as much more interesting, as it brought out into closer detail the surrounding scene. We stood for some moments turning from point to point in admiration of the grand picture below, while my host called my attention to the chief objects of interest.

As we took our places at the breakfast-table, Mar-Nol-Fay explained that while the Board of Governors felt it their duty to enforce capital punishment in my case, they did so with the greatest reluctance and regret. Only the interests of the entire nation could justify such a step. They desired to make the intervening week as pleasant as possible.

Notwithstanding my impending fate, I was filled with curiosity as to the origin of this people separated by so many thousands of miles from other civilizations. My host was in a communicative mood, and I could not resist asking the question as to how and when this nation came into being, and by what means it had been maintained for so long a period without any knowledge of it coming to the outer world.

"We date back our existence as a people," replied the governor, "about two hundred and fifty years. An English ship, having on board a band of religious enthusiasts seeking to escape persecution, sailed from England toward the close of the year 1642. In the beginning of the following year a Dutch vessel, with a similar party, also set sail for America. By a curious coincidence, both of these were driven by great storms to the southward, partly dismasted, and getting into

the ocean currents which pass around the Saragossa, drifted onward until they finally found themselves, after enduring many dangers and privations, at the mouth of the Congo river. The English ship arrived on the 10th of April, and ten days later the Dutch cast anchor in the vicinity. Both ships set to work to refit; meanwhile there was friendly intercourse between the two vessels. By the time the repairs were completed, the colonists had arrived at the determination to find a home upon the banks of the river at the mouth of which they were then anchored.

"It would be too long a story," continued the governor, "to enter upon the details of their arrival at Virland. More than a year was occupied in making their way from this point to the great plateau encircled by the Myas mountains, which you can see out of the west window, and which you must have crossed. Under the favorable conditions of climate and soil which prevail here, the colonists prospered wonderfully. With their firearms they quickly drove the savages beyond the mountains, and by carefully guarding the two exits permanently prevented their return. With no enemies to guard against, and every advantage that nature could give, is it surprising that the colonists increased in numbers and wealth?"

"For more than a century and a half the conditions along the Congo prevented even the most adventurous from having access to the outer world. Two parties who sought to return to the coast, about the beginning of the present century, were massacred by natives. A law was then passed making it a capital offense to either enter or leave Virland, and guards were placed on duty to enforce this edict."

I felt curious to know under what form of government the colonists had begun their life in the new land.

"Oh, there have been many changes," replied the governor, "the central idea of a republic running through all of them, but at times in a form so far re-

moved from the ideal republic that it might just as well have been called anything else."

"But you seem to have made marvelous progress in science and the mechanical arts. Have your people worked out these things unaided by European knowledge?"

"Not altogether, although great progress had been made, when, in 1852, an American with a small party of natives penetrated the cañon, which is our most exposed point of entrance from the west, and which at that time was less securely guarded than at present. He was brought prisoner to this city and condemned to death, but his sentence was afterward commuted to life imprisonment. Subsequently he was made a professor at our chief university, and being a man of fine education and unusual scientific attainments, was able to place in our hands his entire range of knowledge in the scientific and mechanical fields.

"From this time on the development of our material resources proceeded with gigantic strides. Within ten years after the arrival of the American, so great was the increase of wealth consequent upon the application of steam-power, that production of all kinds was more than doubled. A few men who came into close personal contact with the foreigner, availed themselves of his information, and before the general public had any comprehension of what was involved, charters had been granted by the national Virbund which gave the control of the most important inventions into the hands of a small clique, numbering less than fifty men.

"But this was only the beginning of their power. Through the fortunes thus easily acquired, they were enabled to secure control of mining, the mineral oil, transportation, street railways, and many other interests, upon which the public were dependent, but upon which they were ready to pay hundreds of millions of profits so long as the collection was ingeniously levied, or the tax made in sums so small as to be inappreciable to the millions who preferred to pay rather than contend.

"The social transformation which took place as the result of this concentration of wealth in the hands of the few

was simply inconceivable. Men of marked managerial but of indifferent ethical powers seized the opportunity to obtain their share of the plunder of the nation's wealth. Some saw their chance for a division by threatening from their seats in the legislative halls those already in possession. Judges on the bench were dazzled by the temptation to suddenly acquire wealth in return for favors extended. Men of marked probity in the journalism of the day were subjected to showers of abuse at the hands of a newly-arisen press, organized for the purpose of crushing out all freedom of speech or criticism calculated to interfere with their plans upon the public. The most outrageous measures were praised without stint, or by an artful system of pretended opposition the people were so hoodwinked and cajoled that they joyfully assented to measures calculated to rivet upon themselves chains long since forged for use when their freedom should be gone.

"As a consequence of these rapid changes whole classes of people were converted from lives of comfort to those of distressful toil. The rapid alteration in the methods of production threw other numerous classes almost entirely out of employment. The competition for work became keen: life assumed an intensity before unknown, and thousands unable to secure even the most illy paid labor, wandered aimless from town to town, always hoping that the adjoining county might offer that chance of life which they were denied in their own homes."

"Permit me to interrupt you," I interposed. "I should like to ask regarding the religion of Virland at this time."

"Certainly; that was the most curious phase, perhaps, of the upheaval. Religion of the fourteenth century might be said to have been in a period of renaissance during the time when the things which I have just described were happening. Its ministers prospered as never before. Magnificent temples were erected by private donation. Endowments were common; charities were bequeathed fortunes, and the ceremonial of the churches assumed a gorgeousness and magnificence that the world had probably never before witnessed—unless we go back to the temples of Rome under Nero and Caligula. Beggars stood in scores at the

church doors in obedience to the construction placed upon Christ's words, 'the poor ye have always with you,' and to enable the virtuous rich to enjoy the earned pleasures of comforting their less fortunate brethren by a distribution of alms.

"As you know, we brought with us the Christian religion when we came to Virland. But you would be unable to conceive of the doctrines which were practised in the name of the merciful and loving Redeemer. For example, in one of our cities in which the churches were most numerous and costly, and the people out of employment most numerous and unhappy, a religious procession took place in the year 1868. Hunger had made the unemployed desperate. During their long period of enforced idleness these men, who numbered in their ranks not a few educated persons, had been doing some of that crude kind of thinking which one might expect from such classes. There is nothing that quickens a man's perception of philosophical half-truths like hunger. As a consequence, upon the appearance of the procession, it was surrounded by a crowd. A famous preacher of one of the richer churches walked solemnly out. He was recognized by the crowd, who shouted: 'We want work, not sermons.' The police clubbed the crowd. They became resentful. The military were called out. The crowd continued stubborn. There was no Peter there to stay the hand of the servant of the high priest.

"Well, no matter about the details. The end of it all was fifty-nine bodies of dead rioters who had confused the church with the responsibilities of the civil government.

"I hope you will not confound," continued the governor, "the position of true religion with the stand taken by ecclesiasticism in Rome. In Jerusalem there were high priests who were corrupted by power; there were popes who sowed corruption broadcast among ecclesiastical bodies; a church supported by the state gave rise to the confusion in the minds of French republicans; a clergy supported by tithes and livings has made religion, if I mistake not, something without vitality in your own country."

I hastened to assure the governor that not for a moment did I fail to distinguish

between the live, earnest, active practice of Christ's teaching and the indistinct, half-hearted, mechanical religion which is much the same whether turning a prayer-wheel in Thibet or drawing a monthly stipend in France or Germany or standing in pompous row in an English cathedral.

"About the year 1870, statisticians estimated that one-fifth of all the acres of Virland was in the hands of one hundred men, another fifth in the hands of five hundred men, two-fifths more in the hands of three thousand families, leaving one-fifth to be divided among the nineteen and a half millions who composed the population of the country at that time. The situation at the end of the year 1872 may be briefly summed up as follows:

"Wages, while nominally higher, were eaten up by the charges which were placed upon them through rentals in the cities, transportation charges, and taxes upon the price of necessities controlled by individuals or companies. Tramps abounded. The struggle for existence had become so keen that voters could be bought at a much lower rate than sheep. A man considered himself lucky if he had anything to sell—even a vote. Women, in despair before a hopeless poverty, turned to prostitution, so that the great cities were filled with the unfortunate.

"The press was entirely controlled, either directly or indirectly, by the men who held three-fifths of the soil and had control of transportation. In the leading cities they owned the great papers by a combination of millions. They might seem to quarrel. There were many local jealousies among the editors. But upon certain subjects they were unanimous. You have possibly in your country still the Punch and Judy show. The little figures jump at each other furiously, strike, fly back, and renew the attack. But when the hand on the wire wills it, their fury changes: a new figure comes upon the scene: they all unite in a thoroughly unanimous sort of way in an attack upon the new figure. No matter how deft the manipulation, you always feel that there is a hand upon the wires.

"With the country press, direct ownership was not necessary; railway passes,

small offices, and the importance which comes to the man in a village who is known to be representative of the powers that be ; these were sufficient to make the control secure.

" Lastly, the people themselves had grown servile. They had become a people of ' tips.'

" The waiter in the restaurant took tips.

" The clerk who bought a bill of goods for his employer took tips.

" The employee who approved a piece of machinery, or recommended to his employer the use of material, took tips.

" The policeman took tips, and winked at crime.

" The petty court-officers, for favors rendered, took tips.

" The judge on the bench took tips.

" The legislator in the national Virbund took tips.

" Not a few great officials on the administrative side of government grew unaccountably wealthy and it was whispered that even they took tips.

" The struggling must have some way of revenge upon those in possession. They revenged themselves by tips.

" Tipping had become a broadspread, deeply-rooted, well-recognized national custom. Servants in the great houses no longer received wages. They were engaged at a merely nominal sum and depended upon the guests and tradesmen for tips sufficient to make good what had formerly been recognized as proper salaries.

" What could be the end of such conditions except servility? Freedom was no longer anything but an empty name. Freedom of speech was suppressed among the lower classes directly by policemen's clubs. Among the higher, indirectly by personal attack through the press, by the iron hand of financial influences upon those who had important interests at stake, or by the still stronger factor of social ostracism.

" It was marvelous the organization which these few men had perfected at this time. They held the pebble, and Virland was the pool of water ; when the pebble dropped, its force expended itself in ever-widening circles until the extremest boundary had been reached and every human molecule shaken, and moved, and

rocked, and thrown back by the force of that little pebble dropped so noiselessly into the center of the pool.

" Meanwhile, thinking men who loved their country and wished well to their fellow-men, had been organizing in every part of Virland. They clearly recognized the direction of the times, and saw that unless something were done to check the existing tendencies, not only would every vestige of democracy shortly disappear, but the oligarchic despotism now being constructed upon its ruins would become too formidable to permit of attack.

" At first, the ablest of these men had appeared in the public prints in defense of free institutions and the natural rights of humanity. But one after another they had been beaten down with obloquy, or held up to ridicule, and their private business wrecked. They encountered such disaster as comes to those in the ranks of a forlorn hope. They found that they were only throwing themselves desperately against the escarpment of banded power to be shot down mercilessly ; or at most, perhaps, permitted to drag themselves away from the struggle, maimed for life.

" After a time they had resorted to organization, and in each one of the twenty-six states into which the territory of Virland was subdivided, there had grown up assemblies of disinterested and determined men which had been steadily increasing until they had become formidable, not merely from their intellectual strength, but also from their numbers.

" It was one of the remarkable contradictions to be found in the life of that period, that while the daily journals were absolutely under the control of those individuals to whose malign influences the degeneration of all classes of people was chiefly to be ascribed, the actual editors and working staffs were individually fully alive to the situation. When encountered at private tables or in journalistic clubs, where they felt safe to speak without reservation, they did not hesitate to give utterance to the most unrestricted expressions of disgust at the rottenness of the times. The majority of them had become pessimistic. I remember being present in 1868 at a dinner given at the Shining Lamp Club, where all discussions of public questions took on a tone of humorous

hopelessness that was saddening. The conversation might have been held during the American Civil war in the Libby prison of which I have read, where a party of officers had drawn lots to select the ten who were to be shot at day-break, and where they sat chaffing with that reckless jollity which men will assume even in the most desperate straits.

"In 1871 these organizations, which were known as the 'Toimoietlui,' had agreed upon a general meeting to be held in a mountain city of one of the outlying states where the population was thin and largely agricultural, and where the poverty of the people enabled them to escape that close police surveillance maintained in the wealthier centers of population. Nearly a thousand delegates, representing organizations having a membership of several hundred thousands, met on a given day on a hillside in the open air.

"This was the beginning of the revolution which changed the whole civil atmosphere of Virland. The representations in attendance were not drawn from the ranks of those whose positions were hopeless. On the contrary, while perhaps half were of the moderately well-to-do, the other half represented large interests, and were not only men capable of rising superior to purely selfish considerations, but of taking that more extended view of affairs which recognizes the intimate connection between classes and the dependence every man must have upon his fellows.

"I need not bore you with the details of this convention. I should like to read to you, however, some extracts from the speech of one of those who afterward became prominent. It will give you an idea of the feeling and condition of the times."

The governor went to a library-case at the end of the apartment. Taking down a volume, he returned to his seat and read:

"We have come here to-day to revolutionize the conditions which oppress humanity. Inquiry into the history of mankind leaves in our minds the belief that whatever has been the fate of the republics, monarchies, or despotisms of the past, no parallel to the present can be found in any age. Men of unhappy lot in centuries past have dreamed of Utopias:

people have risen against tyrants; philosophers have devised systems of democracy. But Utopia dwindled into thin air, and its author laid his head upon the block because he dared dream: the peoples have prevailed by bloodshed only to be reconquered by dalliance and scheming: the philosophers have seen their democracy filtered through senates and consuls back into tyrannies more galling and more hopeless than the original despotism.

"Nevertheless, we have no reason for discouragement; the conditions of the past were different from those of to-day. It is impossible that mankind, standing in the light which the science and invention of the nineteenth century cast alike over the material and the ideal, should longer continue to regard with satisfaction a competitive system so wasteful of human energy, so ruinous to the best effort, so destructive of nobler qualities, so fruitful of misery and unhappiness to all classes of mankind.

"To what end does such a system exist? Who are the beneficiaries? Are they our rich men whose money removes their children from intellectual life and carries them down a career of ease and self-gratification? They are certainly not the very poor who grope through the darkness of direst poverty, each day rendered miserable by the terror that to-morrow may hold for them neither food nor shelter, and that after a life of unduly hard toil, old age may bring no promise of comfort or rest. Men and women who, when they have time to think—if, indeed, long hours of slavish labor have left them that faculty—see in the grave their only hope of peace.

"We must turn then to our so-called intellectual classes for the triumph of this civilization. Here, again, this frightful system of competition steps in. A good exhibition of its workings is made in the literary world. It takes the literary man, throws him into chains, and forces him to turn out a mass of stuff, not his best thought, but rather his most voluminous rambings, in response to the cry of 'ten thousand words at fifty dollars per thousand.' From the hour that he hears this cry he deserts philosophy, and rushes through life intent only on the pursuit of the dollar.

“Then, again, the lawyer: the man of thought, who would be an aid to the administration of justice in any properly regulated community, but who is now an incubus weighing each year more heavily upon his fellow-men. He quickly discovers that he is in competition just as much as if he were one of a pack of hungry Russian wolves with a dead body in their midst. He must snatch, and snarl, and seize his share, or presently he will be without food, and, too weak longer to protect himself, in turn become the victim. His aspirations for justice go down under the weary formulas of practice and precedent. In the absence of cases where he may stand in defense of right, he must be content to do the labor incident to an ignoble pettifogging, bred of law so complex and obscure that it might almost have originated with law-makers whose first interest was the creation of a legal profession.

“Take the inventor: the man of genius, who should find his delight in the solution of difficult problems, in blessing his fellow-men with the results of his fullest powers, or in receiving the appreciation due one who has it in his power to confer such widespread benefits. While the first flush of early victories in science is still upon his brow, the inventor finds himself in the midst of a hungry horde who would seize the benefits of his labor. For a while his ingenuity is taxed in fighting the lawsuits which are a part of the competitive system, and thenceforth his brain is paralyzed by his exertions to protect his personal belongings from the snapping company in which he lives. He is but a wolf in the pack, and his invention is the carcass over which they snarl. His competition is no longer in great invention, but in preventing mankind from enjoying the fullest benefits of his discoveries. His reputation is dimmed by the calumnies that are circulated during his many legal fights, and he dies an overworked, discontented, and unhappy man.

“Take the case of great administrative talent. Under the hands of such genius the methods of manufacture might be simplified, of transportation reduced to a minimum, or of distribution centralized. Every one familiar with manufacturing or railroading knows how a strong mind

concentrated upon a given situation may revolutionize methods and work wonders in economy. But this genius, like his brother in intellectual fields, is also the victim of the system of competition. Instead of studying the methods with the idea of saving for the commonwealth, he takes the position of a general in command of an army hired to fight the public interests. His days and nights are spent in stratagems always having in view the seizing of property belonging either to a rival corporation or to the individual citizen. The president of a great railway system, whose mind should be concentrated upon the development of the country through which his lines run, finds his time consumed in plans of conflict with rival organizations, or in the manipulation of stocks in interests, but too often at variance with those of the general stockholder. At an early age his health is destroyed by overwork, and, too late, he seeks the rest he has promised himself, only to find his maladies incurable; perhaps he heaps up riches at the expense of his stockholders or his workmen to bestow them later in public benefactions; or, seeking to reconcile high ideals of democracy with conformity to the practice of the time, becomes an object of ridicule, and finally passes away unhonored and unregretted. Yet such a man, under a different system, might have been of inestimable value to his fellows, his life brightened by honors won, and prolonged to old age because unsubjected to the fierce strain of competitive labor.

“There is no profession and no trade upon which the blight of competition does not lay its corrupting hand. The man of kindly heart who engages in trade or manufacture, finds that he must obey the precedents regulating the hours and wages of labor, or perish in the struggle. If his competitors pay a given rate for long hours, there is ordinarily open to him no course but to pay similar rates and demand similar hours. This is a law, absolute and tyrannical, which crushes out individual aspirations and reduces employers to an inexorable equality.

“Can any one point to a single man, or class of men, benefited by this competitive system of ours? The rich and the poor alike suffer. The intellectual and

the weak are alike its victims. Life in the country becomes a struggle against exactions which are framed upon the principle of 'charging all that the traffic will bear.' Life in the city is a horrible nightmare, where thousands are engaged in a struggle that becomes more desperate with each succeeding year.

"For ten years it has seemed as if republican institutions were about to disappear into the appalling cavern of corruption which greed has dug in its grasping efforts. Nevertheless, my fellow citizens, while we have cause to fear, we have no cause to despair, and when I look over the sea of earnest faces before me, I feel confident that we are here to begin the final contest between unrestricted selfishness and the teachings of Jesus Christ—not the perverted teachings which, for eighteen hundred years, have done duty in the interests of feudality and monopoly, but the true ideal of human brotherhood.

"As the final moment arrives, the conflict must grow fiercer; but rest assured that the logic of truth is mightier than hired force. Regeneration must come from above, not from below; from those who, having wealth, recognize without fear of personal prejudice the universal injustice of the existing system of distribution. It must come from those who have measured the littleness of opulence, the narrowness of lives which are devoted to the conservation of wealth, the dwarfing of intellect which is devoted solely to pleasure.

"I am not addressing an audience composed of the unfortunates; I am appealing to men who are among the well-to-do and the rich. I confess to you that I am made unhappy by the wretchedness of my kind, when it seems so simple a problem to so distribute the responsibilities and rewards of labor that none would be deprived either of the opportunity to work or the just reward for his contribution to the maintenance of mankind. And I feel pleasure that it is this underlying recognition of the miseries of so large a part of humanity that has brought you here to-day."

* * *

The governor ceased reading. I found myself wondering that the men of Virland could be wrought upon by such altruism. They must, after all, have been different from those of my own England. Such words in our own parliament would have been greeted by a broad guffaw,—some of the younger members might even have responded in catcalls, and the speaker would have heard suggestions implying that he should pull himself together.

Meanwhile, Mar-Nol-Fay sat silent, holding the open book in his hand and looking far out over the plain beneath. The words, for him, were real. Presently he rose and closed the book.

"I have an engagement now at the council-chamber," he said, "and I will defer giving you the history of the revolution until to-night at dinner,—if you will honor me by dining with me."

FREEDOM.

BY EDITH M. THOMAS.

How lonely is vast Freedom! I may go,
Or come, or sit in the still house of thought,
All idleness, unseeking and unsought,
From the gray morn to noon, to evening glow.
None shall reprove, if vacant hands I show,
Or question why the task remains unwrought;
Or done, or never done, 'twill be as naught
To every creature on the earth below.

How lonely is vast Freedom! I were fain
To follow any who would be my liege;
To say, "Do this!" or, "To the world's end ride!"
I am as he that once sought all in vain
To enter his loved city, in her siege:
"How lone is Freedom!" at her gate he cried.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ALTRURIA.

NARRATIVE OF SIR ROBERT HARTON.

In the introduction an account was given of Sir Robert Harton's African travels leading to the discovery that a colony of Dutch and English had, about 1642, penetrated the headwaters of the Congo; of the outfitting of Sir Robert's expedition to go in search of the colonists, and his final success, after repeated discouragement, in penetrating Virland.

The first chapter gave Sir Robert's account of his reception by the governors of Virland, his condemnation to death, the stay of sentence, and the main facts of the history of Virland for two hundred years, including the arrival of an American scientist who brought with him, in 1852, a knowledge of the latest progress in science and invention. The sudden increase in wealth consequent upon the application of the latest inventions to labor-saving devices was briefly reviewed, and the causes touched upon which resulted in concentrating this wealth in the hands of a few fortunate individuals, and the deterioration of the State in consequence of such accumulation.

After going rapidly from bad to worse, things in Virland finally became so intolerable that a revolution took place, which, though bloodless, was complete, in that it finally overturned both the social and the political status. The present chapter deals with the history of that revolution.

II.—BEGINNING OF THE REVOLUTION.

AT luncheon time I received a note from the Senior Governor, which read as follows:

"MY DEAR SIR ROBERT:—I find that I shall be closely engaged until three this afternoon. If it is agreeable to you, we will go on horseback to the Ar-Ley Country Club, dine and spend the night. I will then take up the story of our revolution, if you care to hear it."

Accordingly, soon after three o'clock, an official escorted me to the north end of the palace, where the descent to the ground was made by one of the exterior staircases which led from terrace to terrace, each landing-place being a veritable hanging garden rich in plants and flowers, with inviting seats placed at points commanding the most extended views. There was so much to interest and attract that it was nearly four o'clock before we reached the level of the street. I found the governor already mounted, and we were soon covering the ten miles out at a rapid trot, over a road that was kept for saddle-horses and was in a condition rivaling the bridle-paths of Hyde Park.

The club building stood on a bluff overlooking the river which, at this point, broadened out into a lake nearly five miles in width. We found our table waiting for us in a nook on the broad veranda which ran all the way around the long, low building. The sun was already sinking behind the hills. Across the sky floated myriads of "swan-maidens," whose delicate plumage, which had been white but a moment ago, was now turning from

the tenderest dove color to a deep lavender. A gentle breeze rippled the surface of the water, and many little schooners and sloops moved in lazy reflex of the "swan-maidens'" flight, the white sails taking kaleidoscopic hues from the wings of these fleecy ideals floating overhead. So peaceful, so lovely, so happy, was every aspect of the scene, that I could not realize that I had but a week of life before me, and that my host, with whom I was enjoying this beauty, was the stern judge who, but a few hours previously, had pronounced my sentence of death.

As we sat in silent thought, the dove-colored cloud-forms moved their wings in quick, rhythmic sweeps, and, lo, every pinion was changed in an instant to richest crimson. It seemed almost a portent. We continued to sit in silence while the crimson deepened into purple, and the purple grew darker and grayer until we were almost in the dark. A single rift remained in a distant cloud, giving me a glimpse of the clear blue beyond as my one ray of hope.

A little sloop, with a party of joyous voices on board, altered its course and tacked toward the low dock which framed the water-front below the clubhouse. As the boat's boom swung over, and the jib flung itself to starboard with a sharp whip-crack, the voices ceased their chatter. Directly, a beautiful soprano began in soft tones an evening hymn, the others joining in the refrain. I sat in rapt enjoyment; then darkness settled over the water, and the hymn died out.

While still absorbed in my thoughts, there suddenly came light; just how or

whence was not apparent ; it was not blinding, but diffused ; not wearying and irritating with its glare, but soothing. With the coming of light there sprung up the instant buzz of conversation, and I discovered that we were surrounded by many groups.

"You have been present," said my host, "at our evening devotions. As formerly, the vesper-bell called the people into sanctuaries, so now, we almost universally give a few minutes at the close of day to quiet reflection. The gloaming is the most treasured part of our day. We cease work and sit for a few moments in semidarkness and silence, thinking of friends and duties. We have come as a nation to have a keen enjoyment of the restful calm of this time. I doubt if any temple ever held people more devout than those who spend this quarter of an hour under the open sky or wherever duty or recreation may happen to find them."

The position of our table on the veranda commanded a view of the main hall, where at the long, central table every place was already filled. Around about were scattered groups at smaller tables. Nowhere did any one sit alone. The spirit of comradeship, which everywhere prevailed, made a strong impression upon me. My host subsequently explained that the public ideal of good manners had undergone a complete revolution during the past twenty years. Whereas formerly in any public place you would have beheld innumerable solitary persons sitting rigidly, with stony countenances, paying no more attention to their neighbors than if they had been blocks of wood, now such conduct would be considered as intolerable vulgarity, and the actor in such a scene, for by no other name could they characterize such a person, be regarded as a rank egotist. Such a man now would be set down as extremely ill-bred, if indeed he were not looked upon with pity as the victim of monomania.

I perfectly well knew that, in my own land, the excuse for such manners was founded on a belief that any sort of cordiality toward those who happened to be in one's vicinity in a public place, might entail all sorts of disagreeable attempts at familiarity ; that it was considered impossible to talk in a friendly way to strangers without being taken advantage

of. But I had long since differentiated my countrymen, who vary in insular intensity, in proportion to individual vulgarity and selfishness.

This form of mania had at one time grown to such proportions that a hostess at an afternoon tea felt that she violated the proprieties in introducing her guests to each other, even when they were strangers, and she was herself responsible for bringing them together. The Senior Governor explained that a similar state of affairs had come to pass in Virland before the revolution, and such was the increase in the direction of vulgarity during this period that it was impossible to conceive what vagaries might not have been perpetrated under the name of etiquette, had the fungus growth of ill-manners and egotism been allowed to extend.

"You perhaps do not understand," he continued, "that with us, what you call politics and religion have come to be synonyms. As we progressed toward an advanced condition after the revolution, it was found that the highest political economy resolved itself into a principle : THE CARE OF OUR NEIGHBOR. We began to conceive that this was the fundamental thought running throughout all Christ's teaching. Search the Scriptures through and through and you could find nothing but this. As soon as this idea came to be accepted as the underlying principle of government, it was easy to reconcile politics and religion. But under the absurdly false conceptions of the Jewish and Roman economists who made the laws in Christ's time—ideals which were carried down uninterruptedly until within twenty years of our own history, and are, perhaps, even to-day predominant in yours,—neither politician nor ecclesiastic thought of using them as the groundwork of a form of government.

"When once undertaken, however, it proved very simple to reconcile that which eighteen centuries of false practice had declared irreconcilable. The instant every one began to think of his neighbor, that neighbor's occupation of grasping solely for himself was gone. He had no occasion to grasp ; consequently it became unfashionable to seize things for which one had no possible use. A man was laughed into a ridiculous position if he accumulated for the sake of private accumulation. On the

contrary, the motive of struggle for existence having been removed, each one came to give his best effort for the good of all, in such direction as Nature had endowed him: whereas, under the old way, you most often found a man compelled to labor in a direction in which his best talents were wasted.

"Even the churches stopped accumulating. There were no longer orphans to be provided for, or distress to be relieved as an excuse for the gathering together of valuable properties. You know that in England at the time of Henry VII. one half of all the land and riches of the country was in the hands of religious communities."

"Yes," I interrupted him. "Even in later days, before the religious revolution in the Mexico of the American continent, more than half of the land and wealth of that country had fallen into the hands of the church. In Canada to-day the ecclesiastical benefices are a serious tax upon the general prosperity. Even in New York, a single church is said to own property to the value of over one hundred millions. The policy of acquiring and never selling, but on the contrary re-investing the interest by a clerical direction which has become skilled in real estate and other profitable investment, leads to the inevitable piling up of mountains of wealth, to the vast detriment of the people. It also follows that with such interests at stake, many churches have unwittingly become the bulwark of the old competitive system which made sacred, methods radically inconsistent with the teachings of Christ."

"But we are wandering from the information that you desire. The action of the convention," resumed the governor, taking up the history of Virland where he had left off when he was obliged to go from the breakfast table in the morning, "was not confined to a string of resolutions. It had at its head a man of clear vision and determined courage. Nor were its other elements less marked. Its members were representatives of the thinking classes—always a minority in every country, though not by any means so small a one to-day as the remark of Carlyle's which you quoted to me yesterday about 'thirty millions of my countrymen—mostly fools,' would seem to

indicate. The convention represented not only a minority of numbers, a minority of wealth, and a minority of influence, but a minority of brains, for the great professions with their opportunities for gathering wealth attracted to their ranks men of talent of every kind, and, once imbued with the peculiar ethics of their codes, these shut their eyes tightly to any change of law calculated to benefit the people at large or reduce the opportunities for individual extortion.

"In but one respect were the delegates to the convention in a majority. Of courage, of intrepidity, of determination to bring about the right, and of sympathy for the misfortunes of their fellowmen—in these they were well provided: and as compared even with numbers and wealth, we find that such equipment and fearlessness, backed by a sense of right have been formidable factors at every period of the world's history.

"The man whose influence dominated the convention, and of whose tragic fate I will have to tell you later on, was a member of one of the wealthiest families of Virland. He had graduated at the leading university, and afterwards while nominally a counselor-at-law at the Capitol, had devoted himself to society. For three years he was a leader in every fashionable movement. His coaches and servants were the most perfect in their appointments; his town house was a palace; his country place might have been designed under the master mind of a Fouquet, with another Lenôtre and a Lebrun as his assistants.

"Before the end of three years came weariness of all that pleasure offers. At this moment his attention was directed to some unusual discoveries of iron ore in a distant State. He suddenly disappeared from his usual haunts, made rapid tours of inspection over the mechanical world, and when next heard of was the center of a group of engineers engaged in planning under his direction a plant for the manufacture of iron, more extensive than anything heretofore seen in Virland. Within a year a hundred chimneys were pouring forth volumes of smoke from his new plant. Under his constant scrutiny the cost of production was lowered. Of naturally inventive mind, he gave close personal attention to the simplification

of mechanical and chemical processes.

"Presently, when every mechanical detail had begun to move smoothly he found time to turn his attention to the men who every day came and went as part of the splendid organization which his brain had evolved. First, their physical wants, then their mental wants became his cares. He planned a system of insurance by which they should be provided for when accident, old age, or decrepitude, removed them from active service. The studies made during this period broadened perceptibly the horizon of his views of life. His mind lost interest in the limited confines of his workshop and centered itself upon the greater workshop of his country. The more he studied the problems of government the simpler they became.

"'Given a land of unlimited capabilities of production.'

"'Given labor sufficient to produce, twice over, all the crops required for the comfortable feeding of the population of Virland; labor sufficient to build all the houses required to protect comfortably and even commodiously all the people of Virland.'

"'Given labor sufficient to grow the raw materials, weave the cloth and manufacture twice over all the clothes required for the comfort of the people of Virland.'

"'Given these conditions it becomes a mere matter of organization to so arrange, in proper place, this labor, to so transport the product, to so insure the rewards of effort, and to so distribute the results as to make certain the satisfaction of all concerned.'

"To him the talk about over production in one section, about crops ungathered and rotting, about the mines closed, while miners were standing idle, about the factories shut down while operatives walked the streets seeking in vain for a chance to labor—about all this useless waste, while elsewhere there were millions destitute of these very necessities of life, seemed the veriest nonsense. Such talk might do for cheap politicians, who knew nothing of organization except the petty devices of party trickery. But to him who had spent his nights in arranging an extensive system of supply and distribution, and had seen his plans work out with precision as does the general who stands on an elevated point of his

battlefield and watches his brigades, and corps, and divisions taken into action, one after the other, in response to the brief orders which his aides-de-camp have just galloped off with—to such a man the stupidity of keeping one-half the country idle while the other half cried in vain for food and clothes, seemed inconceivable. He knew personally most of the leaders who were crying out in support of the wisdom of the past, and he knew just how superficially most of them had studied the defects of existing systems, preferring to shut their eyes to evils however radical, to risking political extinction at the hands of the good people who pride themselves chiefly upon their conservatism.

"Quiet in manner, reserved and somewhat brusque in intercourse with the public, Lin-Feld had few qualities calculated to render him popular with the average of his fellows. As a speaker he was capable of plain statement without the slightest rhetorical flourish. It was strange then to find him practically directing the movements of the convention. As its deliberations proceeded, the confidence in his sincerity and powers of clear-headed reasoning grew until at its conclusion he was appointed chairman of the executive committee which was to take in hand the work of revolution.

"From this time until the cutting short of his life, his mind was devoted unselfishly and completely to the interests of his fellows. The man who makes up his mind to serve a great cause unselfishly must also make up his mind to become a martyr. Such has been incident to the history of the great reforms of all times, and the tragedy which cut short the career of Lin-Feld, proved how few exceptions there are to this seemingly inexorable law.

"The plan presented to the convention did not seem very formidable on its face, and would scarcely have been considered revolutionary even by its most pronounced opponents. The small State of Del-Mar was to be taken as the point of initial experiment in higher government. Del-Mar contained a by no means advanced class of citizens; but its population was very small as compared with the larger States, and it was sufficiently removed from the capital of Virland to enable the experiment to be far advanced before attracting

public attention. The entire forces of the revolutionists were to be concentrated within the limited area of this State. Nearly three hundred members of the convention pledged themselves to remove their families, homes, and fortunes to the State within six months. Another one hundred agreed to enter the State as speakers before the first election. Yet another contingent engaged themselves to establish a vigorous press which should reach the homes of those citizens most likely to favor reform.

"The State of Del-Mar contained not more than three hundred and fifty thousand people. The soil was rich and the mineral resources were remarkable. But at an early date in its history it had been controlled by men whose interests were opposed to its best development, and the laws upon its statute books were the very worst of any State in Virland. As a consequence, it had shared but little in the material prosperity which other States had enjoyed after the introduction of labor-saving devices.

"The first result of this immigration was the introduction of new life. The immigrants who came to settle brought with them many modest fortunes, and the increased activity consequent upon the arrival of so much intelligence put the old inhabitants into a good humor and formed a favorable preparation for the reception of new laws and a new order of things. Not merely were new and able men coming into Del-Mar and becoming active in every branch of labor and manufactures, but an energetic committee had in hand the work of educating the older residents of the State. It distributed its members over the several counties and set to work in the most patient way to locate every man of integrity who might be free to aid the cause of reform. Subcommittees exchanged territories and the work of selection was reapproved. Then the fullest effort was made to convert the object of these attentions. Local committees were established, and it was not long before an organization was complete such as had never before been possessed by any political party. You were telling me of the early days of the American State of Kansas, when men who were strongly opposed to slavery gave up their homes and immigrated, rifle in hand, into

a country where they hoped by courageous self-sacrifice to win their State and through it their Nation to a recognition of the evils of slavery. Well, there were no rifles taken to Del-Mar, but the spirit of those engaged was not the less earnest. They believed that with rapid intercommunication between peoples and the parallel marches of science and invention, the day of rifles was passed. Hereafter we were to have only wars of ideas, with the Illogical ever in retreat before Truth.

"It would be too long a story to recite the history of the next three years. Under the energetic management of the chairman of the executive committee the population of Del-Mar grew from three hundred and fifty thousand to six hundred thousand. The legislature was in the hands of able and sincere men, and the Chief of State, as the executive officer of the government was called, had been one of the original members of the revolutionary committee. By this time the attention of the officials at the capital of Virland had been called to the condition of things in Del-Mar. Correspondents had been sent into the State with a view to denouncing the leaders of the new movement, and the abuse showered by the government press can be described by but one word—rabid. The attacks thus made were in turn attracting the wide attention of those in sympathy with reform and served as advertisements for the bureau of immigration."

"But," said the Senior Governor, interrupting himself at this point, "it is nearly midnight, and I must postpone until to-morrow giving you an account of the plans which the executive committee had formed for the government of the new State. I am happy to add that they did not involve the endangering of vested rights by any arbitrary taxation. What took place was of so wise a character as to disarm the criticism of men of large fortune, while it met with the most universal approval of those of smaller means, and changed the very atmosphere of life for those unfortunates who had hitherto been buffeted from pillar to post, until existence had become a nightmare. To-morrow I must be early at a meeting of the Board of Governors. I have provided a friend's sloop for your entertainment during the day, and shall meet you again at dinner.

(To be continued)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF AN IDEAL REPUBLIC.

III.

BY SIR ROBERT HARTON.

HOW many people are there in this civilized world who really think? That is, how many are there who are not guided by the prejudices of early instruction? Who is he that is willing to say that he is a reasoning being? What is the subject which he feels capable of considering, free from the prejudices of his early environment and education? Is it a question of government before which he is able to throw aside his preconceptions? Is it one of religion, where he feels certain that no influence of parental or ministerial teaching will fetter the free movement of those powers with which God has endowed him? Or is it in matters of taste in which he can feel specially sure that no early association or dimly formed ideal will draw his brain away from the performance of its highest function?

I sat in the early morning on the broad veranda of the country club, an inviting breakfast before me, the air fresh and invigorating. The newly risen sun was playing a hundred tricks with the foliage on the hillside. I had been wondering how the people, who seemed so happy, had achieved their independence from the mass of customs and ideals, laws and traditions which in my own country bind Englishmen in such tight swathes that any effort at regeneration seems so wild and hopeless as only to excite the ridicule and pity of even the wisest men.

The difficulties in the way of an ideal state lie in the imperfections of the human mind. The qualities which are inimical to any equitable distribution of those things which make up the comfort of mankind, have been developed by centuries of greed; greed inbred as the result of scarcity in the days when production was incomparably less per capita, but retained now when science and invention have increased production more than twice tenfold—retained because in former days of scarcity not only commerce and government but even religion itself had

acquired rights which were not then and must not to-day be lightly questioned. If these people of Virland were at all like the English then they did not think. My countrymen laugh at the Chinese who go on from century to century accepting whatever is, as right, not dreaming by what slight shades their methods of thought are differentiated from those of this older civilization.

During breakfast, I had been reading in a little volume which I had carried with me on my expedition, an account of the early work of Herbert Spencer, and my mind was lost in amazement before the facts of his first presentation to the public of a philosophy which has since come to be accepted by the scientists of every portion of the globe. How many people were there in Great Britain in the year 1850 ready even to consider a new and striking philosophy? Spencer must have computed it at seven hundred and fifty, for he had the temerity to publish that number of copies of his first work. This would seem to be a very modest estimate in view of the fact that there was a population of at least thirty millions of people to be drawn from. But how wild was his miscalculation is proven by the fact that it required more than fourteen years to dispose of these seven hundred and fifty copies. As he himself says that he gave away a large number, and as it is reasonable to suppose that a percentage fell by accident into the hands of persons who bought them without the intention of reading them, it seems probable that the historians of the future, when commenting on these facts, will estimate that between the years 1850 and 1860 the thinking people of Great Britain numbered about three hundred and forty-nine. Mr. Spencer's second volume met with scarcely a better fate. Undaunted by his first experience, he had the temerity again to risk an edition of seven hundred and fifty copies. For the sale of these seven hundred and fifty volumes but twelve years

were required, proving conclusively that between 1860 and 1870 the average intelligence of Great Britain had risen. Yet this philosophy to-day revolutionizing the world shows what it means for one man to educate the minds of even three hundred and forty-nine others. One can scarcely help, in this connection, wondering whether if, instead of selecting England for his field of operation, Spencer had transferred his volumes to Central China, he might not have instructed three hundred and forty-nine Confucians within an even shorter time than fourteen years.

My mind went back from these thoughts to the difficulties which must have presented themselves to the framers of the new government under which the people of Virland were now so favored. By what method was the mind of the average Virlander so radically changed? In my talks with the Governor he had laid great stress upon present conditions in contrast with those which existed under the old system of competition. "Of all the infinite variety of waste resulting from competition," he had said, "the worst was the waste of mind. Men were diverted from the line of greatest usefulness, the resulting loss to the community being almost inconceivable."

Turning to my book once more, I found an illustration which threw light upon the Governor's meaning. Not only was Herbert Spencer fourteen and then twelve years in disposing of a total of fifteen hundred volumes, but it was by the merest chance of fortune that he was in position to write even the first, or having written that, to proceed with the work which will have so important a bearing upon the future of mankind. Luckily for the rest of us, Mr. Spencer had been left a small income, sufficient not only to meet his modest wants, but also to defray the cost of publishing the very limited editions which were first offered. He had worked for nearly twenty-four years before the outlay in publishing his philosophy was returned to him by a recognition sufficiently broad to make the publication profitable. Had he come into the world without income, as does the average man, this brain would probably have been devoted, by the exigencies of providing for daily living, to a clerkship under

government, or at best an editorial place on some newspaper, where the grind of the recurring issues would have left no time for serious thought. How much has the world lost by refusing to its talented children time to think through forcing them as slaves to stand upon the daily treadmill.

Yes, Governor Mar was right. Of all the losses to mankind, the waste by diverted intellect is incalculably the greatest. I recall a conversation which I had upon the occasion of my last visit to America. It was with a friend of a great railway magnate whose plans were threatening the status of a vast number of railway securities, and who had acquired nearly a hundred millions by his ability to conduct strategic wars upon kindred interests. Speaking of his friend he said: "You cannot gauge the brain power of this man. If, instead of being in the midst of this fierce competition, he had been able to devote his talents to the organization of a general system for the good of all, he would have left the country richer before his death, by easily a thousand millions of dollars."

I ran over in my mind the list of men of great energy, of clearness of vision, of constitutions adapted to continuous effort, who were now wholly bent upon self-aggrandizement, but whose minds under a different spirit of competition would have generously expanded, and who would have grown nobler in their efforts in behalf of all instead of harder and narrower in their efforts in behalf of one. The list of my own personal acquaintances included great artists who had distorted art, and whose characters had in turn become distorted; skillful logicians who had been stunted in the advocacy of ignoble causes who would have been wise lawmakers if the world had demanded such services; naturally fine minded clergy, made worldly-wise and self-seeking by their surroundings, who would have been martyrs if they had stood in a colosseum, or saints if their lives had been thrown in cloisters; men in the public service, dwarfed into petty politicians, who under a more liberal system would have been broad-minded statesmen; editors, standing with the left hand in the counting-room safe, dictating mean and pitiful policies inspired by the

necessity for self-protection, who, under conditions differently devised, would have been teachers of the things which are noblest and truest.

While still meditating I was joined by one of the Governor's friends who had undertaken to be my companion for the day. He brought a message from Governor Mar asking that we should sail to the north end of the lake which, as I have already mentioned, is formed by the river at this point. He would join us there in the early afternoon. We were to take our dinner on board the sloop, and trust to favorable winds to get back to the country club by bedtime.

A dozen boats were lying at anchor just inside the little breakwater extending from the north end of the dock. Two men were engaged in making some repairs to sails, but they did not seem to be particularly in authority. My companion walked to a register within the boat-house, registered his name and my own, and inscribed opposite, the day of the month, hour of the day, and the words "Sloop Rest." We went on board and my companion asked me to assist him in hoisting sail. There was no sailing master, and it was evidently expected that we should not only do our own sailing but cook our own meals as well.

Mainsail and jib were quickly hoisted, and in a moment more we had run past the breakwater, hoisted staysail and topsail, and were beating up against a breeze which would easily bring us to our destination before the appointed hour. When we had finished coiling the ropes and putting everything in ship-shape, my companion threw down for me a couple of blankets and a pillow, suggesting that I should stretch myself out in thorough comfort while he held the wheel, promising to ask me to relieve him further up the river, where the channel was broader and no knowledge of hidden rocks required.

"No one owns such a thing as a yacht in Virland," explained my guide. "The boats you saw on the lake are the property of the club, and the number kept in commission is determined by carefully prepared statistics, so that it may exceed by a trifle the average demand. Whereas formerly individuals maintained yachts

at very great outlays, the boats themselves being unused a considerable part of the time, now there is ample accommodation for all. The cost to each individual is the merest trifle compared with the outlay involved by individual ownership. You will perhaps be interested in knowing," he continued, "that our revolution owed its success largely to the object lessons in economy given by our clubs and great corporations. For instance, the property of the country club here represents an outlay of what in American money would be more than half a million dollars. The annual dues are but fifteen pounds in your money. For this each member of the club practically becomes the owner of a palace. Not only that, but it is kept up for him by trained servants acting under a committee who feel honored in giving their supervision without compensation, and who take from his shoulders the accurate administration of his property. The lawns are carefully looked after, the table well supplied, the service well maintained without any care or worry upon his part.

"What would £15 provide for if expended by me individually? I might build with it a log cabin in the back woods and have left enough to buy a skillet and a gridiron. This lesson," continued the Governor's friend, "had been carefully inculcated, as I have already said, by the many clubs which were in successful operation over every part of Virland before the revolution. Not the less important were the proofs put in evidence by the great manufacturing corporations of what could be done in the way of economical production by thoroughly organized enterprises conducted upon a vast scale. Take the case of iron manufacture. Whereas at one time pig-iron, when produced in many small furnaces, had cost eight and ten pounds per ton to manufacture, the price had already at the time of the revolution been brought down two pounds ten shillings. After the revolution, all worn out, badly constructed, or badly located plants were abandoned. Whereas formerly many questions of local interest, of personal prejudice, or of railway competition had entered into the location of manufacturing establishments, under the new control the whole

matter passed into the hands of a board of experts who were responsible to the public for the proper placing of plants with reference to ores and their qualities, the vicinity of supplies of limestone and coke, the nearness to the expected markets, et cetera."

Our boat had reached the end of its course, and I stood ready to loosen the jib and staysail. When we had tacked and everything was taut again, the man at the wheel resumed:

"You will scarcely believe me when I say that the scientific direction which was brought to bear upon this one industry of iron resulted in an immediate reduction in the cost of production and marketing of nearly fifty per cent. If you will take into consideration the large margins which had been enjoyed by the great iron masters, you will easily see that the actual saving to the public represented a total exceeding sixty per cent. As a consequence, iron came immediately into use in a thousand ways where its price had been formerly prohibitive."

"What became," I interrupted him, "of the great iron masters after the revolution?"

"Oh, perhaps that is the best feature of the whole thing," was the reply. "Listen and I will give you one case: One of the most enterprising of the great iron kings, as they would have been called in your language, was a man whose plant had excelled all others in its comprehension of the needs of architecture and the skill with which it was organized. I once breakfasted with this man at the house of our secretary of state. An iron girder of unusual depth supported the broad ceiling of the breakfast room. The conversation turning to the manufacture of iron, through no fault I must say of the gentleman himself, he gave those present an illustration of what foresight and nerve could do for the iron manufacturer. 'You see that beam? Well, it cost me a million dollars to put in a rolling mill capable of producing one single beam such as that. Once in, the demand for such heavy beams instantly extended. I was able to charge my own figures. Before my competitors had realized what was going on, or screwed themselves up to the point of making so large an expenditure, I had taken mill-

ions from the business, and even after other plants were established, my reputation already achieved, continued to send me the cream of the orders.' This will give an idea of the business capacity of the man. Before the revolution he had cleared twenty or thirty millions of dollars and had endeavored to withdraw from the active management of his affairs. Of a naturally generous and social disposition, he bought a great landed estate which had belonged to one of the most noted families of Virland. His studies and intellectual acquirements justified him in seeking the society of the refined. But he found the greater number of the doors of the ancient families into whose neighborhood he had moved, guarded against him by a prejudice which after many years only grew more and more impassible. Discouraged but not disheartened he turned to the broader society of the metropolis of Virland. After many years he found that his money brought about him a class so largely made up of the self seekers that he could feel but little satisfaction with his position. At the alumni dinners of colleges having a need for additional halls and professors he found himself an honored guest, seated at the right hand of the president, his opinions listened to with respect, himself toasted and made much of, but only too evidently in view of hope of benefactions. Familiar with the corruption of politics, there was no field open to him in public life. He found pleasure however in building great libraries, and returning to the public a portion of his surplus profits.

"The discipline required by his vast establishment bred discontent, and when during a serious strike of disaffected workmen, the military was called in and a number of workmen killed, he was held up by the press with unsparing ridicule as a man who grasped from working men with one hand, while with the other he played the part of generous donor.

"For such a man the times were out of joint. But no sooner had the revolution taken place—although no one had more seriously opposed it—than he came to the front. His magnificent talents for organization were at once in demand. Recognizing with quick intuition that the changed order of affairs was to be perma-

ment, he put behind him the past and gave his heartiest coöperation to the new state. For the next ten years no man was more useful or more honored in the state. The fact was that he had always felt at heart the warmest sympathy with the people and with all ideas of reform. It was the impossibility of reconciling his position with his sympathies and aspirations that had made him the paradox he had previously seemed to himself and friends."

My companion kept me interested with stories of changes which had been wrought by the revolution in the characters of prominent men of Virland, until well along in the afternoon we made our last tack, threw the bow of the sloop into the wind, and dropped anchor at our destination.

"Did Governor Mar ever give you the three principal ideas under which those directing the revolution of Delmar classified the aims of the new constitution? No? Well, they are in the introduction to the little book on our constitution, which you will find in the cabin there. You will perhaps be interested in looking them over while I go ashore."

He went into the cabin and brought out the volume, then, jumping into the small boat, pulled off after the Governor.

I opened the book with much curiosity. As a rule, revolutionists have contented themselves in their declarations with

generalization. The aims of those directing the State of Delmar had been reduced to very few words, and these were specific.

"The legislation for the State of Delmar will be modeled with a view to insuring the following results :

"First. To keep every citizen employed for at least six hours each day—this provision being intended to embrace all classes.

"Second. To do away with useless employments; that is, those which do not add to the real wealth of the State.

"Third. To remove temptations to the acquisition of unnecessary riches. This involves the prevention of unusual opportunities for control of exchanges, of transportation, of sources of mineral supply, and other ways in which undue, unfair, extraordinary or excessive profits may be grasped. Having prevented these, it follows that the principal sources whence spring the corruption of legislation would be done away with, it no longer being to the interest of any man to control votes or create a false public sentiment."

I put down the volume wondering at the boldness of the program. It is all very well for the mice to propose to bell the cat, but the doing of it—that is quite another matter. My curiosity was aroused and I awaited with impatience the coming of the Governor, who would be able to give me the story of how so radical a change came about.

(To be continued.)

SIMULACRA.

BY WILL HILL.

POPPIES, peeping down intent
O'er the river's brink,
How little do ye think
In your delight and wonderment,
The beauty there unto you shown
Is but an image of your own.

Philomel, when balmy night
Sweet notes doth waft again
Responsive to thy strain,
Thou listening oft in rapt delight
Deem'st it some song of love-lorn mate—
'Tis but thine own at Echo's gate.

Maiden joyous in thy youth,
The world seems very fair
With roses everywhere.
A world of innocence and truth :—
'Tis but the image thou dost see
Of thine own maiden purity.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF AN IDEAL REPUBLIC.

IV.

BY SIR ROBERT HARTON.

“‘IT is impossible to make people good by legislation!’ was the cry heard throughout Virland in the years just preceding the revolution.” It was Governor Mar who was talking. He had arrived on board the sloop late in the evening. We had prepared our own dinner, and were now seated enjoying the breeze which rippled the long stream of moonlight coming across the water to us from the tree-tops over which the moon was just rising. Our boat cut the water noiselessly and gave promise of an easy return to the club-house before midnight.

“A few of the more intelligent minds,” Governor Mar proceeded, “had begun to recognize the full bearings of the traits and passions with which a man is born into the world, and the importance of the surroundings during childhood and youth in controlling those passions or instilling impulses for good. But the great majority of people, including not a few clergymen, still looked upon evil tendencies as being the direct instigation of a personal devil. They were impatient when any one proposed to assist the church by making such laws as would regulate vice or tend to a more equal distribution of the products of labor; laws which would do away with the many evils resulting

from extreme poverty and destitution on one hand, and immoderate and unusable wealth on the other.

“‘Legislation never made any man good!’ was the cry of one class of casuists, while some outside the clergy, viewing the labor problem, declared that God divided men at their birth into the lazy and the non-lazy, just as one class had believed for more than a century that a good God had condemned at their birth some hundreds of millions of souls to eternal punishment. It was a corollary to this that tramps were the result of inherent worthlessness, and not of any conditions of the labor market. In an address made at this time, Lur-Feld called upon the churches to throw off their lethargy and refuse to be longer quiet under laws pagan in conception, and opposed to every principle of Christianity in statute and enforcement. ‘If the Christian ministers of this land,’ he said, ‘could once be aroused to the glaring discrepancies between the laws, which they so admiringly tolerate, and the laws which would consist with the teachings of Jesus Christ, a new code would come into existence within less than half a score of years. Two-thirds of all that we call vice would disappear under conditions favorable to

the moderate distribution of wealth. Take the police-court records of Virland, and search them for incipency of crime. What do we find? In our city there were in a single year more than four hundred victims of suicide—the majority driven to self-destruction by their hard surroundings and the fierce methods prevailing in the world of competition. Tens of thousands were the victims of alcoholic poisoning, encouraged by laws passed at the instigation of those whose means of livelihood were confessedly dependent upon a traffic which in the nature of things must cause widespread destruction. To the same fierce competition which drove its hundreds to suicide, its tens of thousands into the desolate night of poverty, while it heaped up incalculable riches for the few, must be ascribed the great majority of all such crimes as hatred, injury of fellow-man in business, and nine-tenths of the lies told, because lies result from cowardice, induced by fear of loss of possessions.

“In the train of evils resulting from the same causes may be placed not a few of the sins of pride, all of the sins of covetousness, and wrath, and envy, and even a considerable portion of those of lust, for to ill-conditioned marriages, brought about by mercenary motives on the one hand, and the abject poverty which makes women its victims on the other, may be assigned much that comes under this head. If a clergyman truly believed what I am saying to you, he would cease his puny efforts in behalf of isolated cases, and turn his attention to the reform of legislation. If from even a thousand pulpits came a strong, earnest cry for new laws of Christlike justice to all men, the old laws handed down from pagan Rome would disappear almost in a night, and we should have that new dispensation referred to by Sir John Biles, when he predicted that a new era of political economy would yet dawn which would perform as well as promise, and which would rain the riches of nature into the laps of the starving poor.”

Governor Mar put the wheel into my hands at this point, and went forward to lower the topsail, as the wind had freshened and across the moon several ugly clouds had begun to scurry. My

thoughts went back to England and to the consideration of what a splendid organization like that of the English Church might do for the world if once its ministers could be roused to a spirit of real Christianity. But, alas, I knew only too well how closely the thoughts of the clergy were interwoven with the civil, political, and social institutions of the land. Even to attack such a law as that of entail, which is held as a relic of extreme barbarism in other lands, would be almost equivalent to questioning one of the four Gospels. Not that they were other than sincere men, well-meaning and pious, but they accepted without question the laws and customs which had been bequeathed to them, hoary with the approval of semi-barbarous tradition.

The topsail having been hauled down, Governor Mar came back to the wheel and resumed:

“The first legislature which assembled after the control of the State Delmar had passed into the hands of the men of the new order, was confronted by the most difficult of problems.”

* * *

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—With four parts of “A Brief History of an Ideal Republic” in hand, the Editor of *THE COSMOPOLITAN* felt safe in beginning its publication, believing that before the expiration of the four months required for its appearance he would have further news from Sir Robert Harton; perhaps greet the return of Sir Robert himself. Consequently it was not explained to our readers that the fragment of the history of Virland which was being published, had been forwarded by Captain Ralph Vorst of the merchant ship *Zephyr*. Captain Vorst had found a bottle floating in the waters of the lower Congo, and upon opening it had discovered a closely-written manuscript. With the manuscript was a request that the finder should forward the enclosure to *THE COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE* in New York. The Editor takes this occasion of making acknowledgment to Captain Vorst for his courtesy.

The failure of Sir Robert to send any further communication during these four months, or to arrive in person,

causes the gravest anxiety as to his safety. Most unfortunately, too, his narrative breaks off at the most important point. He has already given us to understand that Virland has succeeded in carrying out reforms which are regarded as impracticable in our own republic, and which have been pronounced impossible of attainment by not a few of our most distinguished public men. As copied by Sir Robert from the little volume of Virland history, the ideas upon which the reforms were based were thus formulated:

"The legislation for the State of Delmar will be modeled with a view to insuring the following results:

"First. To keep every citizen employed for at least six hours each day—this provision being intended to embrace all classes.

"Second. To do away with useless employments; that is, those which do not add to the real wealth of the State.

"Third. To remove temptations to the acquisition of unnecessary riches. This involves the prevention of unusual opportunities for control of exchanges, of transportation, of sources of mineral supply, and other ways in which undue, unfair, extraordinary or excessive profits may be grasped. Having prevented these, it follows that the principal sources whence spring the corruption of legislation would be done away with, it no longer being to the interest of any man to control votes or create a false public sentiment."

The serious problems presented in these brief paragraphs are of the widest interest to the minds of those hopeful for the evolution of society. It now seems

probable that another people has gone beyond our crude experiments and have reduced government to a scientific basis, where the law of Christ has become synonymous with the law of the land; where the rights of individuals are protected against the strong hand of brute force or the keen devices of mental cunning. It will be interesting, therefore, to turn to the bright intellects in our own country and ask opinions and suggestions. "Is such a civilization possible? How can mankind work out an ideal which would be scientific in its distribution and embody in its fullest extent the ideas presented first in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and lastly, in the declaration of human rights subscribed to by the American colonies?"

While in suspense as to the fate of Sir Robert Harton, the Editor of *THE COSMOPOLITAN* has decided to submit to some of our most distinguished men a copy of the principles upon which the first reform legislation of Virland was modeled, and beg that they will give, through *THE COSMOPOLITAN*, the result of their most careful thought; the hope being that through this consensus of statesmen some practical suggestions may be evolved pointing the way to higher ideals and more equitable relations between men.

Should it prove true that the life of Sir Robert Harton has been sacrificed, and that all connection with the republic of Virland has been cut off, his work may even then not prove destitute of results. Where the interests of so many millions are at stake, it is at least certain that too much thought cannot be given to problems having so intimate a connection with human happiness.



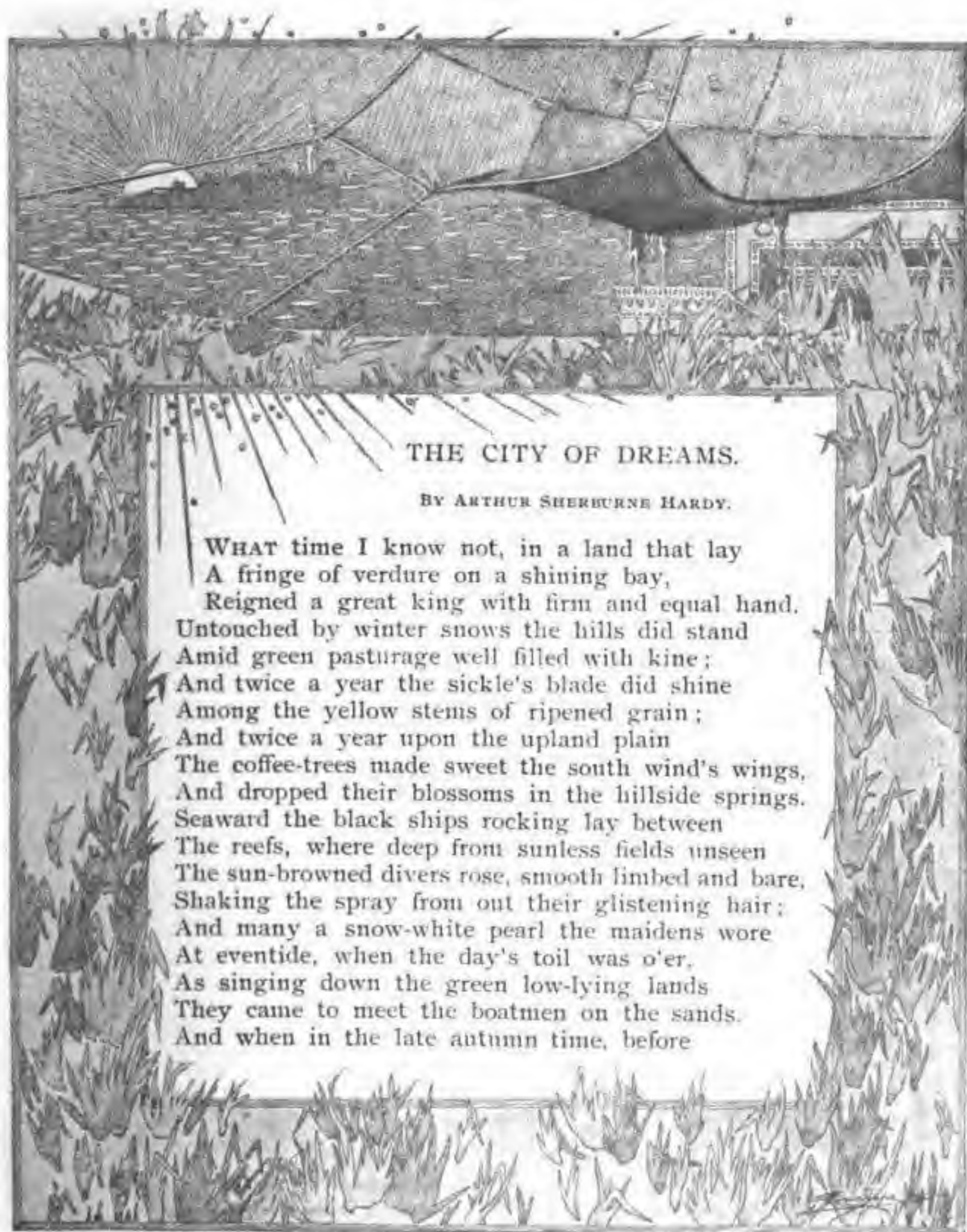
THE COSMOPOLITAN.

From every man according to his ability: to every one according to his need.

VOL. XX.

JANUARY, 1896.


No. 3.



THE CITY OF DREAMS.

BY ARTHUR SHERBURNE HARDY.

WHAT time I know not, in a land that lay
A fringe of verdure on a shining bay,
Reigned a great king with firm and equal hand,
Untouched by winter snows the hills did stand
Amid green pasturage well filled with kine;
And twice a year the sickle's blade did shine
Among the yellow stems of ripened grain;
And twice a year upon the upland plain
The coffee-trees made sweet the south wind's wings,
And dropped their blossoms in the hillside springs.
Seaward the black ships rocking lay between
The reefs, where deep from sunless fields unseen
The sun-browned divers rose, smooth limbed and bare,
Shaking the spray from out their glistening hair;
And many a snow-white pearl the maidens wore
At eventide, when the day's toil was o'er,
As singing down the green low-lying lands
They came to meet the boatmen on the sands.
And when in the late autumn time, before



The eastern gales the thin white clouds drove o'er
The sullen sea, high on the shelving beach
Full many a merchant ship was drawn ; and each
Day saw within the market-place strange bands
Of dust-worn traders, come from distant lands
With bales of brodered cloth and northern fur,
Sweet odorous gums from over seas, and myrrh,
And twinkling gems that yet should tremble, warm
As new-fallen tears, on snow-soft breast and arm.
For peace, in all that land, reigned with the king ;
And hour by hour the happy days took wing,
As, like to winds that ripple o'er the grass,
With soft footfall the changing years did pass.

Now on a certain day at matin song,
Beyond their wont the city's streets did throng.
Silent the spindles stand within the door ;
Untended browse the sheep upon the moor ;
In the cool shadow of the brass-bound gates
The teller of sweet tales unheeded waits,
And idle sits the shopman in his stall.
For in the great square 'neath the palace wall
Are all men gathered ; and that day the king
Should cross, beyond the hills, the desert ring
Unto a wondrous grove, whose flowering trees
Uprose, an island, set in yellow seas
Of sand ; wherein long time the king had wrought,
With snow-white marbles from the southlands brought.
A city such as no man yet had seen—
So fair it glittered in its girth of green.

Long time had toiled the miner underground
For that wherewith its brazen gates were bound ;
Long time the swift looms wove from stories old
Sweet images in threads of silk and gold,
Wherewith to clothe slim arch and chamber wall ;
And scarce with timid daintiness might fall
Light-sandaled feet upon the marble floor
Of open court and pillared corridor—
So deep and cool, as 'twere another sky,
Th' innumerable stars therein did lie.
And still when round the gray-haired minstrel men
Gather those eastern folk, to hear again
Strange tales of love and doom, or e'en such woe
Or joy as their own simple lives do know,
Is told how when the last white stone was set
In massive tower and slender minaret,
And in the shadows of the whispering trees
The brimming cisterns caught the wandering breeze ;
When in the banquet-hall the wine outpoured
Shone like a ruby necklace round the board,
Well set with many a far-brought dainty thing ;
When to the bath the waiting-maids did bring
Sweet unguents, and fair raiment of such dyes



Drawn by Eric Pope.

"AND LONE HE STOOD 'NEATH THE NEW-RISEN MOON."



As tinge at eventide those eastern skies ;
And in the hall, before the king's high seat,
The damsels cast their sandals from their feet,
And, circle-wise, white hand within white hand,
Waiting the tinkling mandolin did stand—
How when all things at last were thus made meet
In garden and in hall the king to greet,
From out the olden town where long he bode,
With glittering train of shield and spear he rode ;
How scarce a look upon the throng he cast,
How scarce he heard the warder's parting blast—
Many a picture bright his fancy shew
Of that fair city whereunto he drew.

Soon had he passed the sea-washed plain, where low
'Mid screening trees the homesteads stood arow ;
Soon had he crossed the mountain pass, where clung
The wild vine's rings the sharp-edged rocks among.
And stood at last upon the desert brown
That scarce a half-day's journey hid the town.

And now strange things the tale doth tell ; how came
Night-fall at length, and, blood-red as a flame,
The low sun stained curved shield and thin spear blade,
And yet no towered town the wastes betrayed ;
How touched the moon the leaden sea beneath,
Like to a silver hilt within its sheath,
And whitened as with pearls the dusky train,
And yet no turret wall o'ertopped the plain ;
How like the swift tide on a level beach,
The morning light o'erran the sands' low reach,
But bare and empty as an outstretched hand
Beneath the fading stars lay all that land.

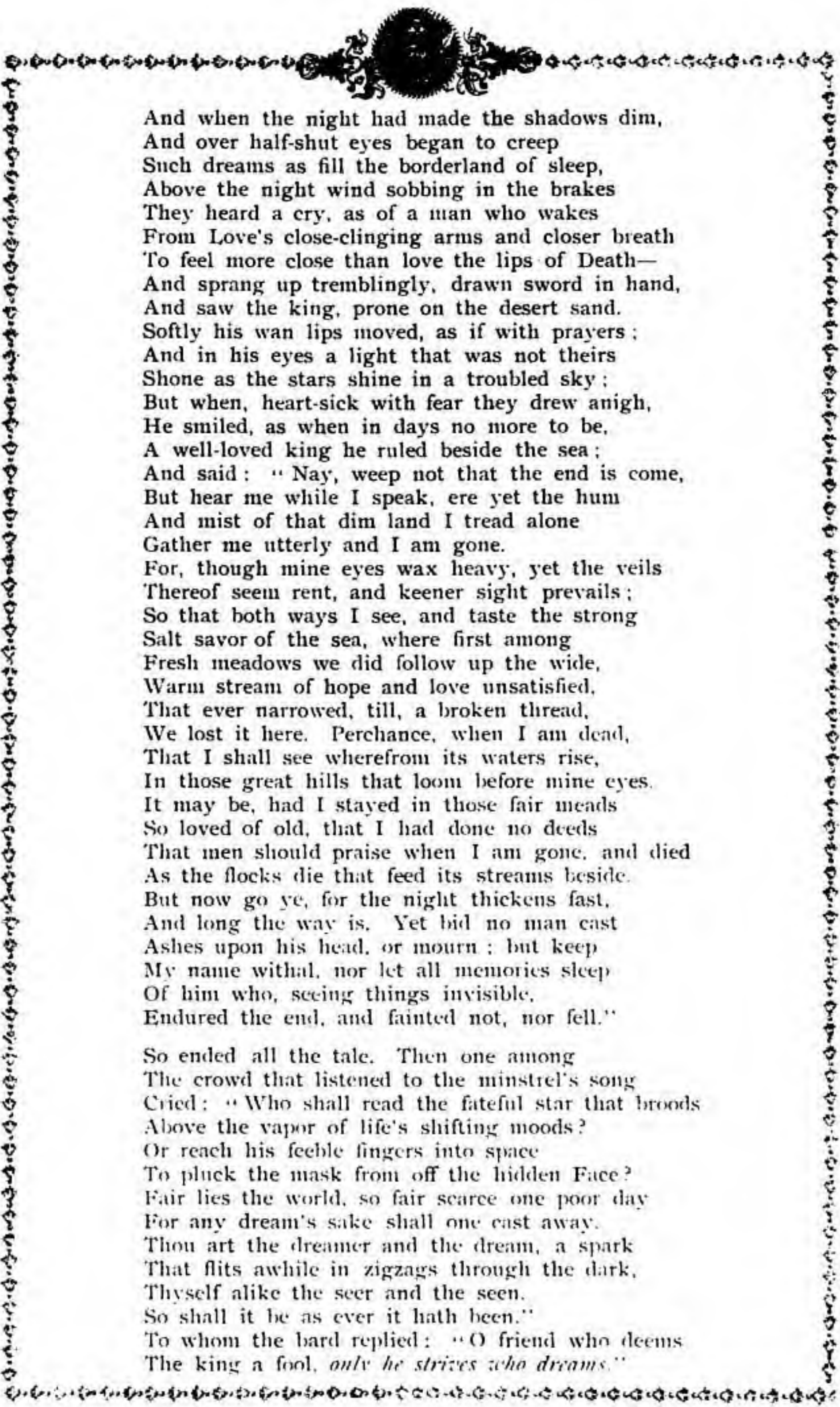
Long on the desert's rim where rolled the haze,
Filled with strange wonderment the king did gaze ;
As one who strives 'mid troubled dreams and deep
To lift th' indissoluble veils of sleep—
So scarce he knew if he should wake awhile
Within his fair-dyed curtained bed, to smile
At the weak fancies of an empty dream ;
Or if indeed a vision he must deem
All the long building of that city fair,
And that e'en now the dream had fled, and bare
Of all sweet hopes his restless heart at last
Trembled to know its longings overpast.
Nay, no false dream it was ! Had he not seen
Ofttimes the black-prowed ships beat in between
The headlands of the bay, with precious stores
Dear-bought upon the far Sabæan shores ?
Had he not seen beside the shaded pools
The maidens combing out the bright-stained wools,
And heard within the quarry tinkling tones



Of skilful hammers on the gold-veined stones?
And scaled betimes the war-worn tower, where swung
Red-berried vines the fluttering doves among,
To watch the caravans that these things bore
Wind drowsily along the saffron shore?
As rain soft-falling on the withered grass,
O'er his faint heart did these sweet memories pass,
'Till sudden longing, oversharper than pain,
From out his wild unrest was born again;
When from his lips a joyful cry did rise;
For lo! once more before his straining eyes,
A dream within a dream, the city lay,
And high 'mid thick-leaved palm and dark rose-bay,
Sun-kissed, its bright domes, northward, where he faced,
Rose like an exhalation from the waste!

Close round the minstrel then the maidens pressed,
As if they too did eager ride, in quest
Of some sweet-imagined dream of blissfulness;
And e'en within old eyes, 'neath snowy tress
That many a bygone summer wind had kissed,
Slow-falling tears did stand as if the mist
Of years did lift from off the hard-worn track,
To give the long-lost dreams of spring-time back.
Scarce had he heart to sing, as he did note
Soft sigh swell up from bosom to white throat—
Knowing full well, withal, what lonely prayers,
Unspoken, faint on the celestial stairs.
And as he turned to meet the older eyes,
Long dead to all sweet dreaming and surprise,
What need had he to tell the bitter end
Whereto they knew his oft-sung tale did tend?—
How, long the footless sands the king did rove;
With what dread fear and doubt he steadfast strove
When night made dim the golden film of cloud,
And wrapped the phantom city in its shroud;
How oft he seemed to hear the hum of bees
Float murmuring from far-off oases;
And then, in shaded gardens, waters cool
Slow dripping into some dark-bosomed pool;
And low-voiced laughter, and the sound of feet
That to the rippling flutes kept measure sweet;
And saw between white-flowering lattices
The fluttering hem of gold-wrought broideries—
Then would all vanish, as a dying tune,
And lone he stood 'neath the new-risen moon.

So wore the days away. From out his hand
The kingdom slipped, and of that joyous band
Scarce half a score of faithful hearts remained,
Wherein not yet all hopefulness had waned;
Till on a day they halted in the shade
That o'er a sandy mound the palm-trees made,
Some rest to gain for weary heart and limb.



And when the night had made the shadows dim,
 And over half-shut eyes began to creep
 Such dreams as fill the borderland of sleep,
 Above the night wind sobbing in the brakes
 They heard a cry, as of a man who wakes
 From Love's close-clinging arms and closer breath
 To feel more close than love the lips of Death—
 And sprang up tremblingly, drawn sword in hand,
 And saw the king, prone on the desert sand.
 Softly his wan lips moved, as if with prayers;
 And in his eyes a light that was not theirs
 Shone as the stars shine in a troubled sky;
 But when, heart-sick with fear they drew anigh,
 He smiled, as when in days no more to be,
 A well-loved king he ruled beside the sea;
 And said: "Nay, weep not that the end is come,
 But hear me while I speak, ere yet the hum
 And mist of that dim land I tread alone
 Gather me utterly and I am gone.
 For, though mine eyes wax heavy, yet the veils
 Thereof seem rent, and keener sight prevails;
 So that both ways I see, and taste the strong
 Salt savor of the sea, where first among
 Fresh meadows we did follow up the wide,
 Warm stream of hope and love unsatisfied,
 That ever narrowed, till, a broken thread,
 We lost it here. Perchance, when I am dead,
 That I shall see wherefrom its waters rise,
 In those great hills that loom before mine eyes.
 It may be, had I stayed in those fair meads
 So loved of old, that I had done no deeds
 That men should praise when I am gone, and died
 As the flocks die that feed its streams beside.
 But now go ye, for the night thickens fast,
 And long the way is. Yet bid no man cast
 Ashes upon his head, or mourn; but keep
 My name withal, nor let all memories sleep
 Of him who, seeing things invisible,
 Endured the end, and fainted not, nor fell."

So ended all the tale. Then one among
 The crowd that listened to the minstrel's song
 Cried: "Who shall read the fateful star that broods
 Above the vapor of life's shifting moods?
 Or reach his feeble fingers into space
 To pluck the mask from off the hidden Face?
 Fair lies the world, so fair scarce one poor day
 For any dream's sake shall one cast away.
 Thou art the dreamer and the dream, a spark
 That flits awhile in zigzags through the dark,
 Thyself alike the seer and the seen.
 So shall it be as ever it hath been."
 To whom the bard replied: "O friend who deems
 The king a fool, *only he strives who dreams.*"

Drawn by Eric Pope.

“AND SAW THE KING, THRONED ON THE DESERT SANDS.”



THE COSMOPOLITAN.

VOL. XX.

MARCH, 1896.

No. 5.



"WHAT A LUSCIOUS TIP—IT KNEW FORTUNED KISSES,
IT DENOUNCED A BROTHER TO THE TEN."

THE GODMOTHERS.

BY HARRIET PRESCOTT SEDGWICK.

THEY were all bidden to the christening, all the godmothers—if by good hap none had been forgotten.

And of course they came. The christening of a L'Aigle noir Franche du Roy

was no mean occasion, under the circumstances, but one to which the family must do honor, if they hastened from the ends of the earth—and beyond.

They did not arrive with the stir befitting *L'Aiglenoir Franche du Roys*. But that might be because of the inborn gentillesse which taught them the proprieties of the sick-room. The young mother, as she lay in the dim vast chamber of the old castle, hearing the cry of the wind over the cold Atlantic, saw them come in singly, and in groups, and at intervals. Very faint and weak, and with some awe in her soul before the new being she had evoked, perhaps she dropped asleep in the space of time between their coming; for when she opened her startled eyes another was appearing.

At first Rosomond did not comprehend it. She felt annoyed at the intrusion. She turned her eyes to the place where the bassinet swung under its laces, the pair of candles in the wall-sconce behind it making that the sole spot of light in the long room full of shadows, where lay the little morsel of life for which she had so nearly surrendered her own, and toward which her heart swelled with a sense of infinite dearness. "Do not, do not touch him!" she murmured apprehensively to the woman bending there with her purples sweeping about her, and the glitter of her diamonds like dagger-points.

And then the plumed and coroneted woman had disappeared behind a curtain into the recesses of the deep casements perhaps; and the young countess closed her eyes forgetfully.

"Yes," she was saying to herself, when with a little flutter her lids opened again, some time afterwards, "that is the old countess who brought the *Franche du Roy* lands to the *L'Aiglenoirs*. It is her portrait that hangs high next the oriel in the sea-gallery. I could never satisfy myself, as I walked there in the late afternoons, if it were a shadow of the carved ceiling on her forehead, or a stain that had come out. The stain is there now. She was a king's favorite.

"Do not touch my little innocent child!" she cried suddenly, rising on one arm. Did her senses deceive her? Did she hear the woman answer, "But it is my child, too!"

And a shudder seized her as suddenly—that woman's blood ran in her child's veins! Ah, if she knew just where, she would let it out this minute! And then she fell back laughing at herself.

There were others in the room when her gaze again wandered down its length. Oh, yes, she had seen them all before. Had they stepped from their frames in the long sea-gallery?

The beautiful young being in the white brocade sown with violets, the band of brilliants in her red-gold hair, mother of the count's father, she who later had rivaled Eugénie in Eugénie's court,—Eugénie, who had the resources of an empire,—and the *L'Aiglenoirs* had nothing,—yet, ah, no, it was empty sound, the scandal that those resplendent toilets were a part of the bribes of senators! She who was a Bourbon *D'Archambeau*! Nor would Rosomond believe the rumor concerning moneys obtained by the dexterous writing of great officials' names, forgery, counterfeit, what you will, by that other laughing lovely thing, a wife out of the convent, a mother at sixteen, the last countess, launched upon life without a scruple or a sou, who loved pleasure so passionately that she came to live at last upon chloral and opium, and died dancing.

She had often silently made friends with these captivating young women, when unable to go out, and during her lonely pacing up and down the length of the sea-gallery, with the low roar of the surge in her ears, while her husband, who had brought her down here with a loving fancy that his child might be born in the ancestral stronghold which some of her own millions were restoring to its ancient grandeur, was away on the water, or in the hunt, or perhaps at the races.

She would not think ill of them now; they alone of all the women on the wall had not seemed to think ill of her, to look at her as a parvenu and an interloper, had seemed to have about them something of the spirit of the century, to have breathed air she breathed herself.

It was natural that the last countess, the pretty piquant creature, should have loved splendid gowns, kept in homespun all the earlier days by her



Drawn by C. S. Reinhart.

"'THE CANAILLE,' SHE SEEMED TO SAY, 'THEY DIE? AND WHAT OF IT?'"

father's mother, the old marchioness, the miser whose hands grew yellow counting her gold. Tante Alixe had told Rosomond of it. There she was now, the old marchioness, gasping for more air, but just as she was painted in her dusky robes, with the long ivory hands like the talons of a bird of prey,—the talons of a L'Aiglenoir,—mumbling of the revenue she had wrung from her peasants who starved on black bread to buy of her the privilege of living.

Perhaps it was thought she had that privilege too long herself. She had died suddenly—very suddenly. Her son, the marquis, was a partisan and a man of power; a great deal of gold was needed in the intrigues concerning the two kings.

And here was another who had died suddenly—but in the open air. There was a red line round her slender throat, too dull for the ruby necklace she wore in the portrait in the panel—the tall, fair aristocrat whose long white throat, alas! had felt the swift kiss of the guillotine's blade. There was not the look of hate and horror in the portrait that was on her face now; only the languor of many pleasures there, the proud and insolent indifference to the pain, the want, the suffering, from which those pleasures had been pressed like wine that left the must.

"The canaille," she seemed to say, "they die? So much the less vermin. They suffer? And what of it?"

Her husband had told Rosomond when he first led her down the long sea-gallery, the story of this proud lady who thought the world made only for her class. It had passed the idle hour; Rosomond had not thought of it again. He had told her all their stories,—that of the strangely wrinkled old baroness, with her eyes like sparks of fire in the midst of ashes, once herself blooming and fair to see, who had kept the keys of the king's hunting lodge and provided for his pleasures there. "Well, yes," the young count had said, "but what will you have? She was no worse than her time. They were infamous times." He had told her of that blue-eyed waxen woman painted in the Sir Peter Lely, a beauty who had followed the fortunes of Charles Stuart into France, very like, but who

had come into the L'Aiglenoir family later by the church door; of the Vandyke, the blonde devotee, who went over with la reine Henriette, and came to a mad-house at last; of the Antonio Moro, vanishing in her golden-brown shadows, an attendant of the English Mary, a confidante of Philip of Spain, who had read her missal at an auto da fe; of the Rubens, the half-clad woman like an overblown rose, a great red rose with the sun on its velvet and dewy petals,—if face and frame spoke for her a woman who was only an embodied sin; of the Holbein, a creature whose appetites had devoured her and left themselves only on the canvas; of the possible Titian. "See the gold of her hair," said the count. "It was dyed. But all the same, Titian—it must have been Titian—knew how to hide the sun in every strand. What a luster of skin! What a bloom on the cheek—it never blushed with shame. What a luscious lip—it knew forbidden kisses, it denounced a brother to the Ten. What a glory in the eye—yet if all traditions are true that eye saw a lover disappear as the gondola touched the deep water that tells no tales. See the hand, what contour, what fineness, what delicacy—and the life in it! But it knew how to play with a poniard whose tip was touched with poison. She did her little best to betray Venice for a price, and she had to leave with the French army, of course."

"I should think you would be glad it is all only tradition," Rosomond had said.

"I don't know. You see the king gave her a duchy, and she brought it into the family. The title lapsed, to be sure, and the revenues went long ago in gaming debts. Do you note that damsel in the white satin,—the Geraart Terburg,—her face is like a live pearl. Well, she was the stake once in some high play."

"That would have been dreadful if it were true."

"As you please," said the count with a shrug.

"And were there no good women, no honorable men?"

"Oh, but plenty! But, *ma chérie*, happiness has no history, virtue has few adventures. Their portraits fade out on the wall as they themselves do in the



Drawn by O. Toasperi.

"SHE WHO WAS A BOURBON D'ARCHAMBEAU."

line. It is the big wills, the big passions, that are memorable, that drown out those others, the weak, that have made the L'Aiglenoirs what they are. Those imbeciles, they are like René's father the day of his burial, 'comme s'il n'avait jamais été.' " And he went on with his narrative.

"But it is a gallery! If we had it at home and—pardon—reckoned its commercial value—"

"Alas! The pictures are no more certified than the traditions! And then one does not willingly part with one's people. Yet—if that were indeed a Titian—"

"You would not have gone over to America to marry me."

"I should not perhaps have gone over to America to marry the heiress of the new world, repeating the adventures of the knights of long ago, but in modern dress. I should have had no need. But I would have married you, Rosomond, had I met you on the dark side of the moon, or else have flung myself headlong into space!"

"You forget the attraction of gravitation."

"Your attraction is the greater."

"Now I do not believe you. The language of hyperbole is not the language of truth."

"Pleasantry aside, you must always believe I speak truth, my wife, when I say that whatever led me in the beginning, it is love that overcame me in the end. I could not perhaps have married,—I who love pleasure, too,—if you had not been the daughter of Dives. For we were beggared, we poor L'Aiglenoir Franche du Roys. But the thing being made possible, I simply entered heaven, Rosomond!"

"And I," said Rosomond, as she stood in the deep window-place, looking up at him a moment, and back again swiftly to the sea.

"And if it were a title against a fortune, as Newport said, and as the Faubourg held a matter of course, although heaven knows a title means nothing now and will not till the king—the good God have his majesty in keeping! is at home again—"

"Oh, let us forget all that, fortune or title!" Rosomond had said.

"No, no. For if the fortune arrive to repair the fortunes of the house of L'Aiglenoir, why not? It is your house, Rosomond. It is the house of your child. And we will make a new house of it. The L'Aiglenoir of the twentieth century shall again be the prime minister of the King of France. The new blood, the new gold, shall make new fortunes, shall bring back the old force, and will, and power, and we will leave these dusty memories behind and ask no one of them to the christening!"

"Perhaps so," Rosomond had said, half under her breath. "But you have been a self-indulgent, pleasure-loving people," she added presently. "And with rank, with wealth, with opportunity—it does not tend to bring back the old brute strength."

"Well, then," the count lightly answered her, "let us take some of the pleasure! See, how purple is the water beyond the white lip on the reefs. We will go try the outer sea, and drift an hour or two in the soft wind. And I will tell you how beautiful you are, *ma belle Américaine*, and you shall tell me what a sailor I am. It is not the sailing of the old sea-robber who came down here to assault the castle in the days of that grandmother of mine twenty times removed, in the days of *La Dame Blanche*, to take her with her belongings and marry her by storm—but it is pleasanter, my sweet."

* * *

That had been in the bright spring months. Now autumn winds swept the Atlantic and cried in the tops of the ragged pines below the castle's cliff. Many a day had Rosomond sat there, listening for the sea-measures, and fancying the beat of the surf was the washing of the wave under the keel that carried *Tristan and Isolde* a thousand years ago and more on the waters just beyond, heard the very music of *Isolde's* wild lament, watched for the white sail across the reef as if the sick knight lay in the courtyard within under the linden-tree, in all the pathos of song, and beauty, and tragic fate, felt herself taken into a world of romance where the murmuring of the breeze in the bough was the murmur of



Drawn by Eric Pape.

"THAT BLUE-EYED, WAXEN WOMAN PAINTED IN THE SIR PETER LELY."



Drawn by W. Grouville-Smith.

"SHE WAS A KING'S FAVORITE."

the skirts of the great forest of Broceliande.

But this had nothing to do with romance now. She lay in bed, with her little child near at hand, the attendants just without, in the tower-chamber where for generations the L'Aiglenoirs had been born.

Through the deep windows she saw the swift flying moon touch the clouds sweeping in the wind, and light the swale on the dark and lifted sea beyond, look in and now and again silver the faces of the paladins and maidens in the pale blue-green forest of the old tapestry that slightly rippled, and rose, and fell, as if with a consciousness of the windy gust that sung outside the tower. It was that old paladin with the truncheon, a paladin of Charlemagne's, from whom the Franche du Roys counted. It was the chatelaine with the flagon that gave him his quietus.

What did it all mean, though, at this moment? With the heavy swaying of the tapestry had these people by any chance left their silken shroud and come out into the room to look at the child?

Not the twelve white-faced nuns; not the featureless young squires and dames; but that old chatelaine of whose needle-wrought semblance she had always been half afraid, who carried the golden flagon and gave the knight to drink, perhaps for sleep, perhaps for death. Yes, that was she; but she had left her majesty in the hangings with her veil and horned head-piece, her trailing samite and cloth of gold of cramoisie. Here, with her thin, gray, tattered locks, pallid, pinched, and shrunken, white as some reptile blanched beneath a stone, what was she to be afraid of now? But this other—"Once the place was mine, mine and my love's!" she was exclaiming. "Till the sea darkened with their gilded prows, the sky darkened with their bitter arrows!" Ah, yes, how many hundreds of years ago it was since she defended the castle after a lance-head laid her lord low; and the sea-rover had scaled the heights and taken her, loathing and hating him, to wife. And from them had been born the line of the L'Aiglenoirs!

And what was she doing here? What were they all doing here, these women?

What right had they in her room? Why were they looking with such ardent and eager eyes, murmuring among themselves, hurrying past one another toward the child?

"Give way!" was La Dame Blanche exclaiming. "I was the first."

"Après moi," said the laughing lady, flitting along in her butterfly gauzes, the diamonds in her tiara flashing out and reluming again. "I am the last."

"If so false a thing ever existed at all," said the woman with the mass-book,—or was it a book of jests,—the Flemish woman who sold her daughter for a tulip.

"I give you my word I existed!" was the gay reply.

"Under your own signature?" asked the pretty patched and powdered Watteau.

"Never mind whose signature."

"Worthless," murmured a lady lifting her black lace mask from features sharp as a death's head, and of a tint as wan as the tints of a Boucher design, "worthless in any event."

"Ah, madame from you to me? I was but your natural consequence, you Voltairiennes, as you were all born on the night of St. Bartholomew!"

"Its tocsin still rings in the air! I am condemned ever to hear the boom of the bell," complained the dark person with the rosary.

And then the laughing lady twitched her beads, and there fell out from her sleeve the perfumed fan whose breath was fever, the gloves whose palms were deadly, brought with her Medicean mistress from Italy.

"A truce!" cried the gay lady. "The birth of an heir to the L'Aiglenoir Franche du Roys, with wealth to restore the ancient splendor, is an event for due ceremony and precedence. I am the child's grandmother, his very next of kin among us. And you know the rights of the grandmother in France."

"They are our rights!" came a shrill multitudinous murmur. "We all are grandmothers!"

"Are we all here?" came a hollow whisper from the chatelaine, the candle-light flickering in her flagon.

"All the fairy godmothers?" cried the gay lady.

"No, no," said La Dame Blanche, "there is one who has been forgotten."

"The wicked fairy," said the gay lady. "The rest of us are of such a virtue. He will value us like his other objets de vertu."

* * *

A cold shiver coursed over Rosomond, but her eyes burned with the intensity of her gaze. She understood it now. He was the child of their blood. That was why they were here, why they intruded themselves into her room. They had a right. It had been their own room. For how many generations had the L'Aiglenois been born in this room! She had never thought of this when she sailed so gaily out of harbor, a bride with her bridegroom, wearing his title, protected by his arm, so proud, so glad, so happy, that she had the wealth he needed—all that so trifling beside the fact that they loved each other. She had never dreamed of the little child to come, who would be dearer than her life to her, and in whose veins must run a black drop of the blood of all these creatures.

And now— Oh, was there no remedy? Was there nothing to counteract it, nothing to dissipate that black drop, to make it colorless, powerless, harmless, a thing of air? Were there no sweet, good people among all those dead and gone women?

Ah, yes, indeed, there they were! Far off, by the curtain of the doorway, huddled together like a flock of frightened doves—gentle ladies, quiet, timid, humble before heaven, ladies of placid lives, no opportunities, small emotions, narrow routine, praying by form, acting by precedent, without individuality, whose goodness was negative, whose doings were paltry, their poor drab beings swamped, and drowned, and extinguished in the purples and scarlets of these women of great passions, of scope, of daring and deed and electric force, mates of men of force, whose position had called crime to its aid, whose very crimes had enlarged them, whose sins were things of power, strengthening their personality if but for evil, transmitting their potentiality—oh, no, these gentle ladies signified nothing here!

A cold dew bathed Rosomond and beaded her brow. But were the L'Aiglenois and their order all there were? Where were her own people? Had they no right in the child? Could they not cross the seas? Was there no requiting strength among them? None in the mother of her father, king of railroads, and mines, and vast southwestern territory, that stern, repressed woman who had spared, and starved, and saved to start her son in life? "Come!" cried Rosomond. "Come, my own people! Oh, I need you now, I and my child!"

But among all these splendid dames of quality, accustomed to wide outlook on the world, and a part of the events of nations, what had these village people to do,—these with their petty concerns, the hatching of chickens, the counting of eggs, the quilting of stitches; these perhaps more prosperous, with interests never going outside the burgh, whose virtues were passive, whose highest dream was of a heaven like their own parlors, a God in their own image, whose lives were eventless, whose memories were pallid, laid aside in the sweep of the great drama and without a part, whose slighter nature was swollen, and whose larger nature was shriveled from disuse? This colonial dame, her father the distilled essence of old Madeira and oily Jamaica, her heart in her lace, her china, and her sweetmeat closet, her scrofulous and scorbutic son lixiviated by indulgence—had she much counteracting force to give? Or had this one, in whom quarreled forever the mingled blood of persecuted Quaker and persecuting Puritan? Or this pale wife of the settler, haunted by fear of the Indian, the apparitions of the forest, and the terrors of her faith; or this other, the red-cloaked matron, fighting fire with fire, the familiar of witches? Was there help to be hoped for from this bland Pilgrim woman who, through force of circumstances, was married with her nursing in her arms while her husband was but three months dead? And did this downcast-eyed, white-kerchiefed mistress whose steadfastness her hardness countervailed, daughter of the Mayflower—the new sea-rover coming out of the East, whose Norse fathers had come out of the East before—do more

than carry her back to the old Danes and Vikings ambushed in their creeks? Her people, indeed! Returning on the source—Oh, it was all one and the same! It was all misery!

What gifts were these grandmothers going to give the child then? she asked. Pride and lust and cruelty, mocking impiety and falsehood, bigotry that belied heaven as bitterly as unbelief, vanity and selfishness and hate, theft and avarice and murder? In the wild and wicked current of their blood the tide was hopelessly against him—his bones would be poured out like water! Her pulse bounded, her brain was on fire—Oh, no, no, the little child—the new-born—some one must come—some one must help—some one!

Some one was coming. There was a stir without; the wind was singing round the buttress as if it brought on its wings the cry of the bright sea, the murmur of the wide wood; the moonlight streamed in full and free.

"It is she," said La Dame Blanche.

"The wicked fairy—the unbidden godmother," said the gay lady with a warning gesture.

"The one whom civilization has forgotten," said the Voltairienne, readjusting her mask, "and whom culture has ignored."

How sweet were the thunders of the sea sifted through distance, the whispers of the wave creaming up the shingle, that crept into the room like the supporting harmony of the wind's song! There was a rustle as if of all the leaves of the forest, a quiver of reeds over blue water reflecting blue heaven, a sighing of long grass above the nests of wild bees in the sunshine. And who was this swift and supple creature with her free and fearless foot, large-limbed and lofty as Thusnelda, clad in her white wolfskin, with the cloud of her yellow hair fallen about her, carrying her green bough, strong, calm, sure, but with no smile upon her radiant face?

"The original savage," whispered the gay lady, as sovereign and serene the

unbidden godmother moved up the room, and the others seemed to dissolve before her coming—to waver away and to vanish.

She parted the hangings of the basinet, and rested her hand upon the sleeper of his first sleep, bending and gazing long.

"Waken," she said then, as she lifted and laid him at her breast. "Drink of thy first mother's life, a balsam for every ill, mother's milk that shall unpoison thy blood, and bring the thick, black drops to naught. Child of the weather and all out-doors, latest child of mine, draw from me will, and might, and the love of the undefiled, acquaintance with the rune that shall destroy the venom that taints you, shall blast the wrong done you! Draw large, free draughts! Return to me, thou man-child! I give thee the strength of my forest, my rivers, my sea, my sunshine, my starshine, my own right arm, my heart! I cleanse thee. The slime of the long years shall not cling to thee. I start thee afresh, new-born. By night in my star-hung tent the gods shall visit thee, by day thou shalt walk in the way of becoming a god thyself. I give thee scorn for the ignoble, trust in thy fellow, dependence on thine own lusty sinew and unconquerable will,—familiar friend of hardship and content, spare, and pure, and strong,—joy in the earth, the sun, the wind, faith in the unseen. This is thy birthright. Whatever else the years may bring, see that thou do it no wrong. I, the unpolluted, strong wild strain in thy blood, the vital savage, save thee from thyself. Sleep, now, sweet hope. The winds sing to thee, the waves lull thee, the stars affright thee not! Dear son of thy mother, sleep!"

And then a shiver ran through the long, moon-lighted tapestry, as the gust rose and fell, and the sea sighed up the reef, and there was only silence and slumber in the room.

But Rosomond's women, when they came again, wondered and were wise concerning a green bough that lay across the child.





Drawn by Robert Burns Wilson. "SO DEEP THE DARK ABYSS—SO DEEP THE DARKNESS OF THE ROLLING CLOUD."

THE COSMOPOLITAN.

From every man according to his ability : to every one according to his needs.

VOL. XXI.

JUNE, 1896.

No. 2.



THE IMMORTAL THREE.

BY ROBERT BURNS WILSON.

UNHASTING, but delaying not,
Their even steps keep even pace
With life, and time, and man's doomed race ;
Soon passing—passing soon, forgot.

Comes rich-robed Memory ; looking back,
Which way the vanished days are gone ;
Her quenchless torch in her right hand ;
With backward-glancing eyes that strain
Across the past's receding plain,
The desert of oblivion.

*Drawn by Robert Burns Wilson.*

THE DESERT OF OBLIVION

But not alone upon life's track
 Comes Memory :—Whoso looks, shall see
 Beside her, ranging sea and land,
 Wherever bends her endless course,
 Pale-featured Sorrow, and the gray,
 Unsleeping lion of Remorse.

Swift-limbed they move with even pace,
 Together, these immortal three ;
 These three, that never quit the chase
 Wherever souls of mortals be.

Wherever souls of mortals' be :—
 Wherever on life's toiling way
 They turn ; be they or strong or fleet—
 Earth knows no sheltering covert free
 From these close-following, tireless feet.

No lingering for the sun to rise :
 No weariness at dusk they know,
 Night holds no darkness for their eyes,
 No barrier hinders where they go.

Drawn by Robert Burns Wilson.

"IN VAIN THEY SEEK SOME HAPPIER SHORE."





Drawn by Robert Burns Wilson.

"THESE WILL THE HELPLESS DEAD PURSUE."

Swift-limbed they move with even pace,
 Together, these immortal three;
 These three, that never quit the chase
 Wherever souls of mortals be.

Through storm and battle—and along
 The dallying ways of love and song;
 Through quiet fields where mild-eyed Peace
 Smiles on the happy world's increase;
 Go they from hut or palace door,
 And be their world rich-grown or bleak,
 Still, seeking, mortals ever more,
 Find not the happiness they seek.

Wherever on life's toiling way
 They turn, the glimmering shadows fall;
 Alike upon the desert-plain
 And on the wind-blown, grassy lea:
 The while the city's bastioned wall
 Is slowly crumbled in decay,
 Still, tossed upon a troubled sea,
 In vain they seek some happier shore;
 They seek some happier shore in vain.

Drawn by Robert Burns Wilson. "MORE DARK THE SKIES, MORE STRANGE TO VIEW THE DIM LAND THEY ARE JOURNEYING TO."



Which way the rounded sail may strain ;
However fair the winds that blow ;
Day after day, they drift amain,
Where deeper seas still deeper grow :
More dark the skies, more strange to view
The dim land they are journeying to.

So deep the dark abyss—so deep
The darkness of the rolling cloud
Which swings and sways, but never drifts
An instant from its place, nor lifts
Its dreadful shadow from that brink
Where Silence, in her misty shroud,
Stands, pressing on her wordless lips
The hush of moveless finger-tips,
While, by her threatening glance, she draws
The line, which, whoso passes, slips
Into the soundless gulf of sleep !

So deep the dark abyss—so deep
The gulf of unawakening sleep :—
So deep, indeed, may not one think,
All following footsteps, here, shall pause ?
Here, Sorrow and Remorse be stayed,—
That Memory, baffled here, shall sink
Undone beside the yawning brink,
And, in oblivious dust, be laid
Her torch, extinguished in the gloom
Which it no farther may illumine.

But these, if what is writ be true,
These will pursue the helpless dead ;
However far the fields they tread,
These will the helpless dead pursue.

Swift-limbed they move with even pace,
Together, these immortal three ;
These three, that never quit the chase
Wherever souls of mortals be.

THE ROUTING OF A GHOST.

BY JOHN J. A'BECKET.

"WHY, nothing in the world could be better," exclaimed Miss Buchanan with decision. "If they'll only take us, Mina!"

The two young women who regarded with such approbation Farmer Paine's house, had but just arrived in this glorious Virginia valley. Their artistic souls were enchanted with the countless pictures which caught their eyes on every side.

But their primary need now was to find a farm-house where they could board. Paine's had been mentioned as a very desirable one, if he would take them. He was a well-to-do farmer with a family.

The house was, in truth, an ambitious one. Built of brick, two and a half stories high, it had a white wooden porch in front, covered with royal masses of wisteria. In the rear, another porch ran the whole length, and a trellis, covered with honeysuckle, screening its occupants from the sun.

Standing high up on the mountain side, it overlooked the village, nestling a couple of miles away in the valley below. The view of the broad slopes of richly varied farm lands, with the wide river sweeping majestically through them, was superb. "Just as Claude Lorraine-ish as can be," Miss Buchanan said. But it did not demand a highly artistic temperament to find delight and delicious repose in this widely stretching landscape.

The young women, opening the gate, made their way to where a woman was sitting on the back porch. The sunlight sifted through the honeysuckle screen and made patterns of light over her comely proportions, while the summer breeze was fragrant with perfume.

"Is this Mrs. Paine?" said Miss Buchanan ingratiatingly.

"We are artists from Boston," continued Miss Buchanan. Her companion had come to a halt a little behind her. "We expect to spend two or three months in the valley and are looking about for some place where we can stay. We thought that perhaps you might let us come here and board with you."

"I never do take boarders," returned Mrs. Paine sententiously.

"I don't think we would be much trouble," persisted Miss Buchanan. "We would fall right into the ways of the house. All we want is to be fed and have a room to sleep in."

The young woman had the air of waiving many of the points which boarders usually insist on. But barring heat in winter, the most self-denying boarder could hardly ask for less than she mentioned.

"I don't think I can," Mrs. Paine slowly replied, still calmly eyeing them, as if to see whether they revealed reason for any different view.

"In this great, big, beautiful house there must be some room you could let us have," returned Miss Buchanan persuasively. "Do take us in! We are in love with the place, and the house."

The little Paines had successively grouped themselves about their mother. They took a keen interest in the parley; and presently it was developed that there was a vacant room, one of the largest and nicest in the house, but Mrs. Paine seemed loath to let the women have it.

"Mar, tell her," burst out one of the children at last, as if weary of cross-purposes.

"Well, you see," said Mrs. Paine with a querulous touch of irritation, "we jas' don't use that part of the house much. There's queer noises, and — and — goin's on there. Naturally, people don't like that."

Miss Buchanan's eyes twinkled with delight. She exclaimed with great animation: "Oh, you mean that you have a ghost? Why, we'd like to come all the more for that. We'll pay board for ourselves and the ghost, too. I've always wanted to live in a house with a ghost."

She was evidently perfectly sincere, and her companion, for the moment, betrayed no more emotion than a fly on the wall. Miss Buchanan didn't believe in ghosts one bit, and the thought of one in this homy, comfortable, modern farm-house, basking in a flood of sunlight,

which the grasshoppers made resonant with their chirps, seemed ridiculously incongruous.

In the end, they got the room, a large, bright, corner one in the front of the house. Beds were located in the diagonal corners, and the women bestowed their belongings about in a home-like way. They were delighted with their success.

There was an outbuilding, too, which seemed specially designed for their need as a studio. It had once been a country store, but Mr. Paine took out the counters, and they were able to set up their easels there.

During their first evenings in this pleasant farm home there had been laughing conjectures about their ghostly cotenant—"Our Brother-Boarder," as Miss Buchanan gaily dubbed him. Would he come round? And how would he come round? There was no doubt the family believed in the ghost. There was a sullen disinclination on their part to discuss him. The Paines, one and all, shunned that end of the house after nightfall.

But nothing more ghostly befell the girls than the ripping, shrieking winds which sometimes swept down on the house from the Devil's Gap, a narrow pass high up on the mountains. They would hear the distant roar of the wind gathering there, and then the crescent rush of it, as it shrieked like a demon down the slope and grappled with the sturdy farm-house, tearing on again with shrill screams down the valley. This was creepy and exciting.

The girls also learned that the forest, which began just above the house, was believed to be haunted with ghostly troopers of the Blue and Gray, whose souls had left their shattered bodies there in war-time.

Three weeks had passed away. The two artists had grown indifferent to these local preternaturals, inasmuch as they had been favored with no corroborative evidence of their existence.

One night, however, Miss Buchanan awoke to feel her bed oscillating. It pitched about till she felt as if she were in a steamer crossing the Channel. She lay wide-awake, wondering what could be the cause of this. Suddenly, out of the darkness, she heard Miss Gorner slowly rumbling into speech: "M-M-Molly, is your bed rocking?"

"Yes. Doing a hammock act," replied Miss Buchanan. "Has yours rocked, too?"

"Yes; for half an hour. I'm almost seasick." Miss Buchanan's companion, Miss Gorner, was not a facile soarer into the realm of the imaginative, and, under the circumstances, she felt that there could be no doubt that the beds had rocked.

"I am going to get up and see what it is," she said promptly.

They both arose and began to investigate. When they had lighted the kerosene lamp, they discovered that their small alarm-clock indicated a quarter after two. The door was the first thing they examined. The bolt was in place, the key turned. Then they looked under the beds. Then in the wardrobe, the only other possible place in the room where any one could be secreted. It was as empty as it ever was. Then they looked into each other's countenances.

"You are sure you felt your bed roll, Mina?" said Miss Buchanan severely. She knew that she had felt her own toss.

"Yes," replied the other slowly. "I didn't want to disturb you at first; but it continued so long that I wanted to get up and see about it, and so spoke."

"It's very odd," remarked Miss Buchanan thoughtfully, as if conceding the utmost that could be allowed the incident. She went over and tried to push her bed. It required a violent effort on her part to even jar the massive mahogany structure.

"Perhaps it's the ghost—" ventured Miss Gorner tolerantly.

"Nonsense," interrupted the other woman, with a little sharper denial than was necessary. "You know as well as I do that there aren't such things as ghosts! Well, I don't know anything to do except go to bed again. The door's locked, there's nobody in the room but ourselves, and we can't do anything to make the beds any more solid. The strange thing is that there isn't a breath of wind to-night. Though any wind that could make that bed rock," she added with a short laugh, "would blow us through the side of the house. You don't feel nervous, do you?" she asked with a slightly superior air.

"No," replied the good Gorner, with

the simplicity of perfect truthfulness. "Only a little upset in my stomach."

To the credit of the young women, they not only went to bed, but also promptly to sleep. There was no more disturbance and they dismissed the matter from their minds.

Two or three evenings later they were sitting in their room about half-past ten. Miss Gorner was busied in the not very exciting task of knitting a bright red wrister, while her companion was absorbing a Boston paper, reading aloud from time to time such things as she felt would be interesting to the other.

Suddenly, in the wide passage outside, they heard a slow footfall—not heavy, but distinct and regular. They both looked up.

"Who can that be?" exclaimed Miss Buchanan. She sat up, and they both listened. The Paines were invariably abed and asleep by nine o'clock, and both the women knew you couldn't hire one of them to come to that end of the house at that hour of the night. The steps, too, seemed to be coming from the end of the passage where the window was.

"I am going to see who it is," said Miss Buchanan.

She rose, and grasped the lamp, which had no shade. Miss Gorner dropped her wrister on the table, and the two girls went to the door, which they unlocked and opened. Miss Buchanan held the lamp above her head so that the rays would fall on the person when he passed. They heard the slow step approach, heard it pass, and seemed to feel something brush by them, it came so close.

The steps went on with the same methodic deliberation, passed down the stairs, through the lower hall to the front door and ceased. They had seen nothing!

They closed and locked the door, returned to the table and Miss Buchanan set the lamp down on it. Miss Gorner put two or three more logs on the open fire, which blazed on the hearth.

"Isn't it a little colder?" she remarked almost apologetically.

Miss Buchanan stuck her feet out toward the fire with a sharp, half-nervous, half-defiant, little laugh.

"Yes," she said. "It got colder when those steps went by us, Mina," she continued slowly. "We might as well admit

the facts in the case. We can do that to each other without any reserve. Thank goodness, we are neither of us of the weak-nerved kind. I don't mean to believe in ghosts till I have them forced on me. Even then, I don't propose to flatter their odious self-conceit by getting frightened over them. You don't feel afraid, do you, Mina?"

Miss Gorner declared, without too much enthusiasm over the fact, that she did not. Her companion certainly did not seem to be. But had she been scared to death she would have made the best bluff possible at courage.

"Did you notice anything peculiar about that tread?" she asked. The two girls had drawn close to the fire, and the blazing logs threw a ruddy glare on them, while the rest of the room seemed plunged in deeper shadow.

"No," replied Miss Gorner, "except you couldn't see what made the tread."

Her companion's absolute lack of humor often afforded Miss Buchanan much innocent amusement. Restraining herself to a swift smile over Miss Gorner's acute perception, in having remarked the invisibility of the late pedestrian, she said impressively: "I noted two things. If this is a ghost, Mina, and we are going to have the privilege of studying it, I shall make the most of the opportunity. Well, then! First, I noticed the long interval between the sound of the footfalls, and supposed that this was only the dignified slowness inherent in perambulating spooks. Then I remarked that the footfalls were *all on the same side!*"

"Well?" said Miss Gorner.

"Well, that shows that it is a one-legged ghost!" cried Miss Buchanan. "Now, that may lead to his discovery. There may be some reason why a one-legged man should haunt this house."

"It may be a lady," suggested the other.

"Oh," exclaimed Miss Buchanan a little impatiently at this want of proper sympathy with her analysis of the ghost, "it *may* be a centipede; but whatever it is, it only uses one leg, and there must be something in that. A one-legged lady ghost seems the height of vulgarity. I don't believe a real nice woman, if she were a ghost with only one leg, would go thumping round on it at all hours of the night."

The next morning Miss Buchanan, having cornered her landlord in the woodshed, where he was more loquacious than in his wife's presence, asked him nonchalantly: "Was there ever a one-legged person connected with this house? Or with the family, Mr. Paine?"

Farmer Paine looked somewhat surprised at the question. He shifted his cud from his left to his right cheek, pulled down a log or two from the woodpile in a halting, uncertain way, and finally found voice.

"Ef you'd a-seen that air front porch in war times I reckon you'd a-thought there was some one-legged fellers connected with the house—'nd one-arm fellers, too. Right smart of 'em both. They'd fight round here 'nd then be lugged in ter be amperated. Should say there was a one-legged pusson connected with this house," he repeated, easing another log out of the woodpile. "Five hundred one-legged pussons."

Miss Buchanan paused for a moment, dazed by the number of eligibles as one-legged ghosts. Then she asked: "Wasn't there some one of them, or some other one-legged person, especially connected with the house?"

"Now, jes' you tell me, ma'am, why you ask that air question?" retorted Farmer Paine. He stopped his shuffling about and log-hauling, and looked at his lady boarder, his keen, gray eye fully unlimbered.

"Why, because this thing that walks around the place is one-legged," replied Miss Buchanan bluntly. "Of course, the one-legged kind are no worse than the two-legged ones, I suppose," she added, smiling. "I only thought this might help to identify it."

Farmer Paine looked at the young woman in awe and admiration. She was actually getting acquainted with the ghost. Then he spoke with slow emphasis.

"I declare to goodness ef you ain't the fust to find that out. It jes' throws light on this walking critter. There was one soldier that what you say makes me think of. He was a Yank as was brought in on that porch o' mine senseless, 'nd they took his leg off 'fore he came to. He was madder'n a March hare when he found his leg gone, 'cause he said there warn't

no need o' cuttin' it off. He cussed awful," said Farmer Paine meditatively, "'nd swore ef he died he'd jes' harnt the place. 'Nd he *did* die, 'nd it's him as walks; jest out o' cussedness," he added viciously. "I didn't take his ole leg off. 'Nd here he's ben worryin' me 'nd the family 'gone twenty-five year, 'nd queer-in' the place for summer boarders. Ef you ain't cute to get on to the cuss!"

He betook himself off to let Mrs. Paine hear the news. As for Miss Buchanan, having gone so far toward establishing the presence of a ghost as to put a tag on him, it was hardly possible to still flout at the existence of such disembodied wanderers. But ghost or no ghost, she was not going to let it frighten her. No such victory as that for him.

The young woman worked out quite a theory about the one-legged ghost, and explained it to Miss Gerner. "He does this thing for spite," she said. "He was furious with old Paine for letting his leg be taken off, and is doing his best to annoy the family and anybody who may be staying here. It is a petty spirit of revenge, and shows what a narrow-minded, mean thing he is. But, Mina, he's not going to drive me away or frighten me either, unless he has more tricks up his sleeve than I think."

The action of the ghost, a few days after this, confirmed Miss Buchanan in her view of his character and strengthened her determination not to be routed by him. The new activity to which their "brother-boarder" betook himself was to open the bureau drawers and then violently slam them in. This seemed more puerile than terrifying; in fact, conduct hardly dignified in a martial wraith who had deposited a leg on the altar of his country.

"I don't believe he was a Union soldier," cried Miss Buchanan indignantly on one occasion when the ghost had waned in some noisy three-drawer exercises on the bureau. "That might excuse his spite against Mr. Paine, but it makes his conduct toward a New England woman and a foreigner simply contemptible."

The ghost continued to promenade the hall, slam the bureau drawers and rock the beds. Apparently, this was his whole gamut of accomplishments. What vexed Miss Buchanan most was the bed-rock-

ing, because it kept her awake when she really needed the sleep. As an outlet for her indignant feeling she used to indulge in the most contemptuous disparagement of the ghost.

"It must make him feel mean to know that we simply despise him, and aren't a bit scared by his silly little tricks. I can't imagine a greater insult to any self-respecting ghost. When he becomes convinced that he can't drive us away, or even frighten us, he will stump back to his—well, wherever he stays," she said to Miss Gorner.

"But perhaps he will do w——"

"Worse things?" replied Miss Buchanan. "I don't believe he can, poor, limited spook! And if he can I want to force his hand. When he has played his trump card, Mina, and doesn't take the trick, he will get out. Mark my words."

About a fortnight later, Miss Gorner was obliged to go to Chicago. She was very loath to leave her companion alone; or, to speak more by the card, with such unsubstantial company. But there was hardly any choice in the matter, for her presence in Chicago was necessary. Miss Buchanan affected perfect willingness to be left unsupported on the field.

While Miss Gorner was away, the ghost seemed to lose interest. By a natural movement of human vanity, Miss Buchanan concluded that he felt it was time lost to waste his energies on her. It must have been Mina that he hoped to scare.

One day she heard Mrs. Paine speaking with her husband about some visit that seemed to be on the tapis. On inquiry, she learned that Mrs. Paine's people, ten miles away, across the river, were to celebrate some family anniversary with much pomp and festivity, and all the clan had been bidden to the jocund gathering.

"They want us to come and stay three days," said Mrs. Paine, "but, of course, we wouldn't go off and leave you here all alone. Father can go with Pete and Rube for a day, and then come back, and I'll go with Sissy and Abe. Lor' knows, there won't be no lack o' company there."

"Why, don't think of such a thing for a moment," said Miss Buchanan. "I don't mind staying here by myself. I shall love it. Just get plenty of fire-wood put

in my room, and leave me something to eat, and go."

Mrs. Paine was proud of her kin, and the picture of herself as the center of her own family group at such a solemn reunion had been a most attractive one. To appear in two instalments was to shear the spectacle of nearly all its impressiveness. Naturally, the half that went without her would show up poorly; and she did not relish the thought of her female relatives, each flanked by a dutiful husband, seeing her unsupported by that complementary adjunct.

So Miss Buchanan prevailed on them to go, and one ravishing autumnal morning the young woman found herself the sole tenant of the farm-house. Pete had stacked enough wood upon either side of the big open fireplace for a week, and Mrs. Paine had left a generous supply of cooked food, which could be "het up" or eaten cold.

There was something pleasing in being mistress of everything. Miss Buchanan first carefully secured every door in the house, except the front door. Then took her easel and painting materials out on the front porch, and worked there.

When it got too dark to paint any more, she brought her things inside, locked with special care the front door, and went to the kitchen to get her supper. The lower part of the house, dark and closed, seemed lonely, and she decided to take some cold chicken and a slice of ham up to her room and eat her supper there.

Bolting and locking her own door, she freshened up the fire and proceeded to be as cozy as a young woman could when all alone in a secluded Virginia farm-house, with the possibility of an evening call from a ghost. It was a little lonesome. She ate her supper slowly, and then lit the lamp and settled down by the fire to read. Her book was one very suitable to the occasion. It was "Picciola," that gentle tale of a prisoned soldier's love for a sustaining flower. As she sat there contentedly reading, the leaping flame throwing gleams of orange light on her dark, serene face, the little woman did not seem an easy mark to nervous fears.

As a matter of prudence, she had got Farmer Paine to leave his gun, well loaded, in her room. It stood in the corner near the window. Her interest in the

book had made her forget her loneliness, when suddenly she heard the slow foot-fall out in the echoing stillness of the passage. Her first thought was whether she had firmly secured the front door. She remembered perfectly with what care she had done it. Besides, the steps, as usual, were coming from the window and going toward the stairs. It was only the ghost.

But it was the first time she had been favored with its visitation when she was absolutely alone, and there was a quicker beat to her heart as she raised her head and listened to the step. It came to the door, paused, then, with a slightly quicker progress, pursued its wonted course down the stairs and to the front door.

"Well, Mr. One Leg, you have come and gone quietly enough this time," she thought. "It must be that Mina is the attraction. He probably likes blondes."

She settled back to the perusal of her book. The odor of the fresh logs, piled high on each side of the hearthstone, seemed to bring the sense of the woods into the house, and the fire crackled in cheerful companionship. It wasn't so bad being left alone, though, of course, there was that sense of loneliness.

Suddenly, a volley of rifle shots rent the still air. Miss Buchanan gave a quick start and dropped her book. It sounded from the woods, some distance up the mountain road. What if the men from the still had heard of her being alone and meant to have a little amusement at her expense! Well, they would hardly break in the doors. She glanced at the long, dull barrel of the rifle, and took up her book with a quick sigh. There must be a crowd of them to produce such a terrific explosion.

In a moment, much nearer than before, there was another quick, crashing discharge of guns. These boorish jesters had evidently conspired to fire at the same time, so as to get a more deafening effect. Let them fire until they are bankrupt. They could not get in. She glanced through the window. It was one of those divinely beautiful nights when the sleeping earth is steeped in the shimmering splendor of the moon's fullest radiance; and field, and trees, and road, and walls seemed set in a crystal calm by the inundating flood of silvery light. The sharp

crack of the fusillading marauders was a ruder blow to the ear from contrast with this subduing hush. Once more, this time much nearer, came the riotous burst of exploding rifles. Not once, but twice! thrice!!—with not a second's delay between them—came the volleying crash.

This certainly could be no band of straggling bumpkins or larkish moonshiners! There had been scarcely time to reload and fire, the shots had come in such quick succession; yet the volume of sound was the same as before. This seemed a battalion pouring a stormy salvo from hundreds of guns, till the windows rattled and the house shook.

The heart of the plucky little woman, sitting there in mordant loneliness, ceased for a moment to beat; she held her very breath, and her brain grew cold with terror. Her hands fell to her sides and stiffened there spasmodically. She closed her eyes tightly and her whole frame quivered in the thralldom of blind fright. What was this detonating force—this unknown throng of tormenting riflemen—hounding her in her isolation!

For one moment this deathly terror held her in its grasp. The next came the reaction, equally intense. Whatever it was, she must know. Bounding to her feet, she sprang to where the rifle stood, clutched it, flung open the window wide, and with the weapon in her hands, stood there, the yellow light of the lamp outlining her form distinctly. They should see that they had not terrified her. She stood there, full in their view, defiant, looking down on—

The stillest, most absolutely deserted aspect of the valley that had ever met her eyes. The smallest objects were brought out in the dazzling white light of the moon with startling distinctness. There was not the faintest breath of wind. All was as motionless and quiet as death. The rough, yellow road that wound past the house, and uncoiled itself into the valley, showed not a single form upon its tawny length. There was something of solemn repression in the silence and the solitude.

Miss Buchanan rushed breathlessly to the other window that commanded the road till it disappeared in the woods, higher up toward the crest of the mountain. Her eye searched along its entire length. Not a creature in sight anywhere.

As she stood there marveling, from the woods below her belched forth another terrific explosion of musketry, the crashing din of the firing making her ears ache with its blatant fury. It was a salvo from a whole regiment's muskets, with not one living soul in evidence.

Then a thought darted into her mind—that wood haunted by dead soldiers! The persecuting one-legged ghost was playing his last card! He had marshaled the spirits of his comrades, and this uncanny cohort had made a united effort to down her courage.

As this conviction dawned in her mind the young woman felt herself tingle with a new thrill. She leaned from the window, waved her right hand gaily and shouted "Bravo," in mocking acceptance of the ghosts' "feu de joie." Then, standing erect, she set the butt of the rifle firmly against her shoulder, pointed it at the middle of the road and banged away, in a derisive return fire.

Then she closed the windows briskly,

as if the play was over, put the emptied rifle back in the corner, and sat down to her book again, her small frame trembling from the strain; but grateful that her fright had been so passing and her rally so complete. No sound but the roar of the logs came to her ears for the rest of the night.

"Mina," said Miss Buchanan to the gentle Gorner, when, on her return, she had finished telling her of this aggressive sortie of the ghostly regiment, "I told you that when the one-legged soldier had played his trump card and lost, it would end him. We will hear no more of our brother-boarder. I have laid that ghost."

"But——" began Miss Gorner.

"But nothing," cried Miss Buchanan with conviction. "There won't be any others. He will tell the rest!"

Whatever the one-legged soldier did, he walked no more at Paine's farm-house. Miss Buchanan is converted to a belief in ghosts, but she flouts at them more than ever. She has routed one.

TO A FRIEND.

BY DALLETT FUGUET.

PRAY, do not grieve much that you do not gain
 The crown of laurel. You were made to be
 The merry student, friend of minstrelsy,
 Not the protagonist who still must strain
 Up toward the goal which few can e'er attain.
 Remain just loved and happy; rather flee
 Than dare the heights, for they are the most free
 Who walk on in the placid lowland plain.

Stay there, content to write your joyous rhymes,
 For I have thought to catch a glimpse at times
 Of those great ones who gained the topmost bourns.
 And though they wore fame's shining laurel wreath,
 I saw they had,—though hidden underneath—
 Upon each graven brow, a crown of thorns.



De Juventute. — Educational Science in 1947.—**QUÆSITOR.**—You say that these crude ideals of education prevailed up to the very close of the nineteenth century. What worked the change?

MARCUS.—Well, the cause was a very curious one. There was a distinguished man of that period whose wealth was reputed at something like a hundred millions of dollars. He had an only son, to whom he was devoted. He determined that nothing should be spared in the education of this young man, and accordingly sent him to one of the leading universities of the time. There the son was surrounded by everything that money could give him; not in the way of wild extravagance, but in a decorous fashion. The father was a sensible man of kindly impulses who studied his son's best interests. As a result, the latter received the most careful attention through his college course. At the time of leaving the college quadrangle, he represented everything that the most advanced education of the age, reinforced by the power of a hundred millions of dollars, could do.

QUÆSITOR.—He must have been a highly-educated young man, and wise, if only by force of much instruction?

MARCUS.—Well, scarcely. He had gone through endless gymnastics in the dead languages, and possessed a wonderful expertness in the irregularities of Greek verbs or in tricks of Latin prosody. It was the theory of those days that college education should not consist in the acquirement of that kind of knowledge which would be of every-day use in the world, but that it was simply a process of mental training, all the more valuable that the greater part of it pertained to matters absolutely valueless in ordinary life.

QUÆSITOR.—You astonish me. Certainly no people could ever have held such a theory of education?

MARCUS.—Oh, yes, they did; even down to the year 1910. The system had come from the great European colleges of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was so hoary with the approval of the ages that very brave men preferred to continue their usefulness in the colleges, rather than, by opposing what received such universal approval, end their professional careers.

QUÆSITOR.—But was the whole of the college course made up of this sort of thing?

MARCUS.—Oh, no. There were some mathematics—some science—some study of the languages of other peoples then living; and, finally, a superficial course in their own literature and tongue.

QUÆSITOR.—Was not Wisdom taught as the chief of acquisitions?

MARCUS.—No. People had been in the habit of regarding wisdom as "the unteachable." If you suggested such a thing, with reference to youth, there would forthwith be many to declare that the young man would "have his eye-teeth cut" in due time. This was a slang phrase, signifying the acquisition of wisdom by the hard rubbing to which an ignorant person was subjected in the world.

QUÆSITOR.—And The Science of Health—how to take care of one's body?

MARCUS.—Oh, that was taught in a crude sort of way. There was a gymnasium, and the student, if so inclined, could be examined by a medical man, and receive a chart of his points of physical weakness. But there was no such thing as we understand by the "science of health." To them it was a mere side issue, of such small relative importance that it was optional as part of college training, and, in fact, taken advantage of by only a small minority of the young men on the college rolls.

QUÆSITOR.—And what of The Science of Life—how was it taught?

MARCUS.—There was no such thing known. The subject of love, the most supreme of human passions, was carefully avoided by the wise professors of those days. It was relegated to the conversation of callow youths and shy maidens. All the complicated psychological phenomena, a knowledge of which is considered so essential a feature of the groundwork of all education of the present day, were, in those times, regarded as beneath the attention of the wise men who were so profound in their knowledge of the dead languages, and to whom the Differential Calculus constituted such an essential for every-day life.

QUÆSITOR.—And The Science of Human Happiness—how did they teach that?

MARCUS.—Not at all. That was in nowise considered as a science. It was something to blunder into, if you could—ninety-nine out of every hundred blundered the other way,—but was commonly ranked among the things "unteachable." The records of those times, as presented in the daily newspapers or pictured in the fiction of the day, exhibit conditions of widely-spread wretchedness. The poor were miserable because of lack of the comforts or even necessities of life. The rich were ennuyé in their futile efforts to bring to themselves enjoyment by large expenditure. False ideas of morals, of dress, of business, and of the ends of existence clouded even the brightest intellects. The most brilliant minds were frequently the most unsuccessful in achieving happiness. A question widely debated among this select class was "Life: is it worth the living?"

QUÆSITOR.—What was the length of the college course of those days?

MARCUS.—The school course covered nine or ten years; the usual college course was four years.

QUÆSITOR.—And do you mean to say that fourteen years were consumed largely in mastering the dead languages, while the summum bonum was ignored in most cases and neglected in others?

MARCUS.—Having this general idea of the condition of education toward the close of the nineteenth century, you will be able to understand what I am about to tell you. As before related, this citizen of a hundred millions, after

expending every effort upon the education of his son, received him back at the end of fourteen years of school and college work, with every accomplishment of the finished scholar of the period. Necessarily the heir to so many millions was a man of importance to his fellow-men. A generous, wise mind could be a blessing to his country and to those about him; a man of ill-digested thought might be a danger to all.

After the manner of the world, the young man entered gaily into the diversions of his class and encountered the many charming women of his circle. The science of life was almost as unknown to him as if he had been the least tutored savage from the islands of the South Pacific. He had heard the term "psychical phenomena"; but he had applied it as the sort of things that develop in a class of society different from his own.

I shall not go into the story of his mistake. There was nothing in the least discreditable to the generous impulses of a manly-minded young fellow. But it was a mistake that would have been avoided had there entered into his education the simplest rudiments of what, in this year 1947, is so thoroughly taught in our schools under the head of "Science of Life." Add to other deficiencies the absence from the college course of a thorough training in the "Science of Health," and you will comprehend how completely the heir to such vast power was made the sport of a cruel fate. To mental trouble was quickly added physical breaking down and a serious misunderstanding with the father. The latter was aghast at the result of his splendid scheme of education.

QUÆSITOR.—He might well ask if this were all that the great colleges could do toward fitting a young man for taking his place happily in the world.

MARCUS.—That was exactly what he did do. He was bitter in his denunciation of the unreality of such instruction.

QUÆSITOR.—I can imagine a conservative man turning radical under such circumstances.

MARCUS.—He did more. He began a course of independent investigation. "Let us see," he asked, "how much our Oxfords and Cambridges have advanced from the standards of those colleges in vogue in the time of Henry VIII., and how much their American successors have improved upon their models." He engaged men of unprejudiced minds to examine and report. He gave himself up to a study of the existing standards of education, as compared with the necessities of life—the actual necessities of business, artistic and professional life; of the necessities of human beings in all orders of society.

QUÆSITOR.—How did it end?

MARCUS.—It ended in a resolve. Other men had given funds to perpetuate existing systems of training. He would set aside the largest donation ever made; and it should be devoted to the establishment of an altogether new and higher ideal of education.

The word education should take on a new meaning. It should come to signify the acquisition of the useful and the true; to mean the gaining of wisdom—the acquisition of the knowledge of how to live—how to begin life, to continue life, and to end life. He would not only devote fortune, but his life's endeavor to this work. Man should no longer put a pride in learning that which had been left over, as the legacy of a stilted and semi-enlightened age.

QUÆSITOR.—The professors for this new school—where did they find them?

MARCUS.—There were plenty of college professors ready to rally under such a banner when assured that the new field contained a promise of a livelihood, and that they and their families would not be reduced to poverty by a declaration of independence. And when pronounced, that declaration became one of war for the ways of reason against the accumulated inertia of unreason.

QUÆSITOR.—Was the battle long in doubt?

MARCUS.—The turning point came more speedily than you would have supposed.

Established precedent had forced many men into a seeming acquiescence who, at heart, despised the system as a mere mockery of education. Men of prominence, recognizing the work which association performs in the training of youth, had uncomplainingly made use of the colleges because there was nothing better.

QUÆSITOR.—Was there not at that time a large class of newly-rich?

MARCUS.—Yes, and this class had been for half a century a strong support of the established conditions. Having itself been deprived of the advantages of college education, it felt a natural timidity in its criticism of something of which it had but a limited conception. Others, actuated by less manly motives, joined in the cry of support for the established order, hoping thus to distract attention from their own shortcomings.

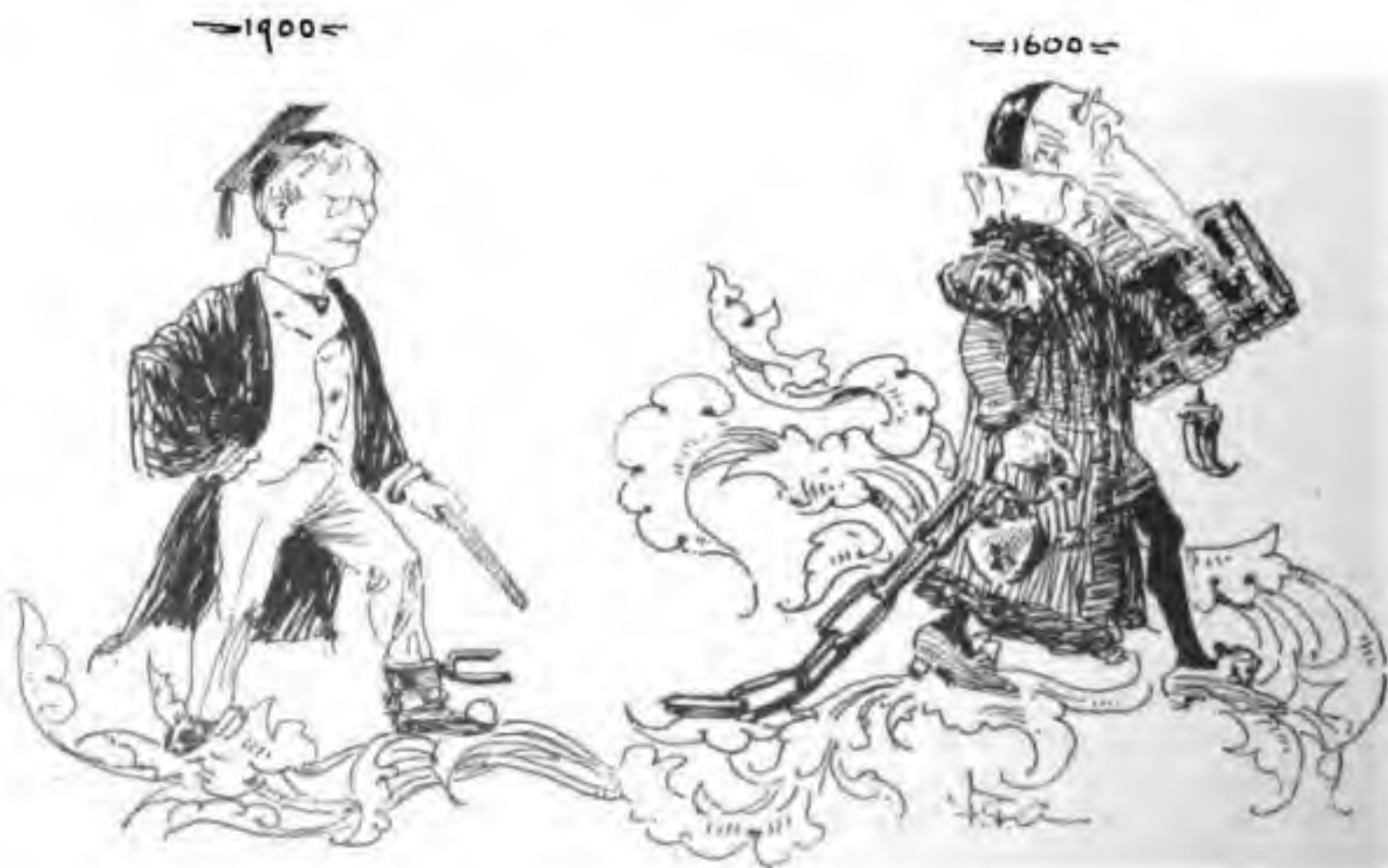
QUÆSITOR.—There was also probably a considerable personal factor dictating the action of the professors then occupying chairs.

MARCUS.—Certainly. A man who had achieved eminence in the line of the dead languages, naturally opposed such a change in the order of things as would relegate him to obscurity. Both his income and his reputation were threatened by such a change. Nothing more natural than that a man whose training has all been in the line of tradition, and whose usefulness would be seriously curtailed by the new scheme, should unconsciously see danger in changing the established order. It is no reflection upon the honesty of such men that they were the last to see what had been recognized for half a century by the average thinker. But the movement once well under way, soon became a stampede. The hour of reason had come, and, when granted a fair hearing, the old and absurd of tradition went down before the irresistible force of common sense.

QUÆSITOR.—And the director of the reform—the many-millionaire?

MARCUS.—You know his name. It stands in the very highest place in the educational annals of all the centuries. To him mankind owes a large measure of that happiness and enjoyment of life which is no longer the privilege of the few but the portion of every man and woman. We no longer live according to precedent, but according to reason.

JOHN BRISBEN WALKER.



THE ANGEL OF THE NORTH WIND.

BY LIVINGSTON B. MORSE.

FAR away, in the white world of the North, amid endless reaches of untrodden snow, under a low arch dotted thick with polar stars, the Little Wind was born.

A desolate world it was—a world of shadows and half-night; a sad world of frozen steppes and splintered ice-peaks jagged against a sable sky. A world of voiceless mutterings; of solemn silence yet more awful—and cold—ah, bitterly cold. There was nothing there but the snow, the sky and the sea. Yet the Little One thrived and loved it well, for cold is the life of a North Wind.

The sea gave her of its strength, the earth of its endurance; the stars crowned her with rime-frost. And the Little One grew and was happy.

Her playground was the wide sweep of the Arctic snows. Here, day after day, she fled rolling, tumbling, shrieking with delight in a mad game of romps, with no thought but her wild glee in the present. Again, she climbed the ragged ice-crag and, whistling shrilly 'mid their silent pinnacles, sent great blocks whizzing and hurtling down their snowy shoulders, hurling herself after them across the frozen plains with a joy-song that rang upward towards the velvet arch, up till it caught amid the multicolored plumes flung skyward from the crown of the of the aurora, up till it struck and mingled with the harmonies drawn from the harps of angels.

She loved the free, wild life; the numbing cold; the endless roving to and fro. But best of all she loved the sea and, like a child, she clung to it.

The sea nursed her in its strong, old arms, rocked her in the wide curves of its green waves, and sang to her ancient runes and sagas, old as the world itself and full of the tragic wisdom of a past of which as yet the Little Wind knew nothing.

So time went on: the Little One grew tall and strong and, by and by, the days of her childhood were past.

"Come," said the Mother Wind one day, "come, you are old enough to journey; it is time to show you other lands; there are many things for you to see. Come, spread your wings and fly with me."

"Away from here?" the Little One asked wonderingly. "Is there another land?"

"Yes, far away—we circle with the earth. Our kingdom is the world itself. The North Wind reigns where'er it blows."

She took the Little One by the hand; they spread their great, broad pinions and went soaring upward from the snowy plains, up into the black-vaulted sky, where the stars now burned like hearts of fire—so close they were, and the white earth underneath grew small and smaller, like a child's toy. The ocean flattened to a plain of green; the booming of the waves hushed to a murmur and then died away. The silence of the Infinite fell about them and the Winds were alone under the stars.

In the profound stillness of the upper air they rested, hovering awhile on outstretched wings.

"We are nearer heaven here," whispered the Little One.

"The earth is nearer," the Mother answered her. "Heaven lies in possibilities." But the Little One did not understand.

The sky grew pallid gray and cloud-streaked; a wan light crept upward from the hidden sun; the stars paled and went out in tears. "Come, it is time to be stirring," said the Mother Wind.

"Whither go we?"

"Southward, to the lands where life abounds. Southward to our kingdom, where all do homage to our strength."

They cleft the air with mighty strokes that bore them onward, headed toward the South. Beneath, the ocean, darkly green, lay billow piled on billow, rolling, revolving, over and over, like a mystic scroll with no beginning and without an

end. Sometimes the Winds, slanting downward, trailed their pinions in the tossing foam. Then, with a cry, rose again, mounting in great leaps, their outspread wings making wild, whistling music, and on their lips the tune of a chant, sad as the plaint of the sea.

"It is glorious!" cried the Little One as she dashed the stinging brine from her eyes and spread her locks, dripping with spray, to float upon the wind. "This is indeed true happiness—to rush in a mad, cold blast over a tumbling sea!"

"True happiness dwells in pain, not joy," said the Mother Wind. And again the Little One did not understand.

Soon beneath them other lands came with the eastward rolling of the world. Barren wastes of sun-dried plain; silent winding rivers crawling, serpent-like, to meet the sea; jagged mountains, snow-crowned and austere, deep-gashed with glaciers ringed with splintered rock rent from the precipice above. They fled across vast lakes, never veering, never pausing in their southward flight. The sun, a great red ball with fiery arms, now chased all day through the heavens, passed from the zenith to horizon line, sank to the under world to rise again—and still the Winds flew on.

"I dread the sun," the Little One complained. "His rays are sharp; they prick my skin like needles."

The Mother smiled. "He is our enemy," she said. "He fights the cold, which is the North Wind's life. Sink lower, earthward."

And now before them all the world grew green—spread with forests full of larch and pine, that clung about the mountain slopes, choked the valleys and crowded even to the rivers' edge; their tops a sea of waving boughs that sung in answer to the rushing of the wind.

"It is like the harps of angels!" cried the Little One entranced. "Hark how they sing to greet us."

The Mother laughed harshly. "It is fear," she said; and, swooping on them with a mighty roar, the moaning trees bent low—almost to breaking, and shivered down the length of their great stems.

"See how they bow to welcome us!" cried the Little One.

"It is fear," the Mother said again. "All things must bend before us—bend or break: a North Wind shows no pity."

Now, as they journeyed through the warmer air, their breath congealed in snow that drifted from them like a ghostly fleet with white sails set steering due earthward. The world again grew wan and white, and, peering downward through the hurrying snow, they watched it sift upon the forests and the plains, dropping a pall upon the dead hopes buried in the fields that lay checked out in squares of brown and sprouting green. Men came from their dwellings, wrung their hands and cursed, gazing up in impotent despair; and the Little One looked on wondering.

But the Mother laughed. "It is at us they rage," said she. "We are their masters; let them bow before us." And on they sped again bearing desolation in their path.

Still southward they flew toward a great city set with circling gardens in a lovely, fertile plain. The land lay smiling in the lap of spring—like a child just come awake, too indolent to stir, upon whose half-shut lids the dew of sleep still lingers. Orchard trees, with swelling buds and twigs ruddy to bursting with the flowing sap, were waiting spring's warm kiss to veil themselves in tender green. The sky was hung with cloudless blue; everywhere birds sang of promise in the glad sunshine, and in the gardens through the vernal grass, crocus, hyacinth and daffodil had strewn a wealth of purple, yellow, white and red.

"Ah, me; how beautiful!" exclaimed the Little One, and, shaking back her locks, still wet with sea-brine, she floated low and knelt upon the grass beside the flowers, pressing them with her icy lips and crooning to them softly as a mother to the babe cradled in her arms. But at her caressing touch the flowers withered and grew black—shriveled like burned paper in her hands. The grass turned sere and yellow under foot; the birds were silent and the buds grew old and wrinkled, still-born in their fuzzy coats; the joyous world about her became sad and gray. Amazed, the Little One rose to her

Mother's side—her eyes were wide with horror.

"What is this?" she asked, showing the blighted flowers. "Tell me, what is this?"

"That is death," the Mother answered. "You have killed them."

"Killed them! I? Oh, no! They were so beautiful—I never meant to kill them!"

"A flower cannot bear our icy touch; they are dead."

"But I loved them," said the Little One; "I only loved them. Why then should they die?"

The Mother laughed scornfully. "What have we to do with love? Ours is to slay. It is fear through which we rule."

"And have we no gift but death?" the Little One asked sorrowfully. "Are there none to love us or to bless our coming?"

"None."

The Little One was silent, gazing mournfully at the dead flowers in her hands. "Who then receives their love and blessing?" she asked at last.

"The South Winds are called the friends of earth," the Mother answered.

"The South Winds—whence come they?"

"From torrid, equatorial lands; nursed in the great heart of the sun—the life giver, our bitter enemy."

"Is it far?" asked the Little One.

"It is very far."

"And hard?"

"The way is very, very hard."

"Thither will I journey then, for I, too, would earn the blessing of the flowers."

"Consider well," the Mother said; "in those hot lands where you must travel the North Winds pine and perish; the suffering will be terrible to bear."

"Yet will I go," replied the Little One, "even if it be to death."

"It is death, indeed," the Mother said; "yet go—for death is the true beginning of life." And this time the Little One understood.

She spread her swift wings and rose high, and higher into the blue ether, above the world to which her breath was baneful, steering straight toward the sun, her crown of rime-frost sparkling like a wreath of stars and the smile of an angel on her pure, pale face.

At first it was not difficult; she had

the courage of her youth and strength. But soon the air grew sultry all about her; she felt the faintness of fatigue; the fierce heat scorched at her wings and she sank helpless toward the earth. Yet courage failed her not; she panted on, striving to reach the goal. Fiery mountains, hot with steam and molten lava, belched their noxious flames across her path. Trackless deserts stretched infinities of burning sand, blistering and breathing upon her with a furnace blast; still she struggled onward toward the great heart of life. Her crown, the symbol of her race, had long since melted from her brow; her blowing hair was singed and dry, like straw; the sun's sharp rays fell pitiless, parching her neck and breast, but courage failed not yet.

Then at length came a time when she could go no further. She leaned in the shadow of a rock, the heat quivering in great sheets about her, and felt that she must die. "It is over," she said and closed her eyes; "I can endure no longer."

Then, from out of the great stillness of the desert, there rose, like the swell of a mighty organ, the sound of a Voice:

"Go back, Little Wind," it said. "Your trials are over. Through courage you have won. Go in peace. Wherever you pass a blessing will linger in your footsteps—go then and bless."

Wearily, yet with fresh courage, the Little Wind turned back, retracing the steps taken with such pains; but now the way seemed short, for a great joy was nestling at her heart. Back she turned through the summer fields, through the happy sunshine pierced with the songs of birds, back to the garden where the flowers grew. And, kneeling on the turf, she took them gently in her blistered hands, touched them lightly with her sun-warmed lips and dewed them with tears as soft as summer rain. The flowers awoke and looking up said, smiling:

"A cruel wind had slain us in our youth; but you, O gentle Southern Breeze, have given life again."

The Little One, weeping softly to herself, said nothing, but smiled back at them. She had learned the mystery of the death in life and her tears were the tears of joy."



Drawn by R. West Cinedinat.

A MATTER OF INTEREST.

BY ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.

"He that knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool. Shun him.
He that knows not, and knows that he knows not, is simple. Teach him.
He that knows, and knows not that he knows, is asleep. Wake him.
He that knows, and knows that he knows, is wise. Follow him."

—Arabian Proverb.

MUCH as I dislike it, I am obliged to include this story in a volume devoted to fiction. I have attempted to tell it as an absolutely true story, but, until three months ago, when the indisputable proofs were placed before the British Association by Professor James Holroyd, I was regarded as an impostor. Now, that the Smithsonian Institute, in Washington, the Philadelphia Zoölogical Society, and the Natural History Museum, of New York city, are convinced that the story is truthful and accurate in every particular, I prefer to tell it my own way. Professor Holroyd urges me to do this, although Professor Bruce Stoddard, of Columbia College, is now at work upon a pamphlet, to be published the latter part of next month, describing scientifically the ex-

traordinary discovery which, to the shame of the United States, was first accepted and recognized in England.

Now, having no technical ability concerning the affair in question, and having no knowledge of either comparative anatomy or zoölogy, I am perhaps unfitted to tell this story. But the story is true; the episode occurred under my own eyes—here, within a few hours' sail of the Battery. And, as I was one of the first persons to verify what has long been a theory among scientists, and, moreover, as the result of Professor Holroyd's discovery is to be placed on exhibition in Madison Square Garden on the twentieth of next month, I have decided to tell as simply as I am able to exactly what occurred.

I first wrote out the story on April 1st,

1896. The "North American Review," the "Popular Science Monthly," the "Scientific American," "Nature," "Forest and Stream" and the "Fossiliferous Magazine" in turn rejected it; some curtly informing me that fiction had no place in their columns. When I attempted to explain it was not fiction, the editors of these periodicals either maintained a contemptuous silence or bluntly notified me that my literary services and opinions were not desired. But, finally, when several publishers offered to take the story as fiction, I cut short all negotiations and decided to publish it myself. Where I am known at all, it is my misfortune to be known as a writer of fiction. This makes it impossible for me to receive a hearing from a scientific audience. I regret it bitterly, because now, when it is too late, I am prepared to prove certain scientific matters of interest, and to produce the proofs. In this case, however, I am fortunate, for nobody can dispute the existence of a thing, when the bodily proof is exhibited as evidence.

This is the story; and if I write it as I write fiction, it is because I do not know how to write it otherwise.

I was walking along the beach below Pine Inlet, on the south shore of Long Island. The railroad and telegraph station is at West Oyster Bay. Everybody who has traveled on the Long Island railroad knows the station, but few, perhaps, know Pine Inlet. Duck shooters, of course, are familiar with it, but as there are no hotels there and nothing to see except salt meadow, salt creek, and a strip of dune and sand, the summer-squatting public may probably be unaware of its existence. The local name for the place is Pine Inlet; the maps give its name as Sand Point, I believe, but anybody at West Oyster Bay can direct you to it. Captain McPeck, who keeps the West Oyster Bay House, drives duck shooters there in winter. It lies five miles south-east from West Oyster Bay.

I had walked over that afternoon from Captain McPeck's. There was a reason for my going to Pine Inlet—it embarrasses me to explain it, but the truth is I meditated writing an ode to the ocean. It was out of the question to write it in West Oyster Bay with the whistle of locomotives in my ears. I knew that Pine Inlet was one

of the loneliest places on the Atlantic coast; it is out of sight of everything except leagues of gray ocean. Rarely one might make out fishing smacks drifting across the horizon. Summer squatters never visited it; sportsmen shunned it, except in winter. Therefore, as I was about to do a bit of poetry, I thought that Pine Inlet was the spot for the deed. So I went there.

As I was strolling along the beach, biting my pencil reflectively, tremendously impressed by the solitude and the solemn thunder of the surf, a thought occurred to me—how unpleasant it would be if I suddenly stumbled on a summer boarder. As this joyless impossibility flitted across my mind, I rounded a bleak sand dune.

A summer girl stood directly in my path.

If I jumped, I think the young lady has pardoned me by this time. She ought to, because she also started and said something in a very faint voice. What she said was, "Oh!"

She stared at me as though I had just crawled up out of the sea to bite her. I don't know what my own expression resembled, but I have been given to understand it was idiotic.

Now I perceived, after a few moments, that the young lady was frightened, and I knew I ought to say something civil. So I said, "Are there any mosquitoes here?"

"No," she replied, with a slight quiver in her voice; "I have only seen one, and it was biting somebody else."

I looked foolish; the conversation seemed so futile, and the young lady appeared to be more nervous than before. I had an impulse to say: "Do not run; I have breakfasted," for she seemed to be meditating a plunge into the breakers. What I did say was: "I did not know anybody was here; I do not intend to intrude; I come from Captain McPeck's, and I am writing an ode to the ocean." After I had said this it seemed to ring in my ears like: "I come from Table Mountain, and my name is Truthful James."

I glanced timidly at her.

"She's thinking of the same thing," said I to myself. "What an ass I must appear!"

However, the young lady seemed to be

a trifle reassured. I noticed she drew a sigh of relief and looked at my shoes. She looked so long that it made me suspicious, and I also examined my shoes. They seemed to be fairly respectable.

"I—I am sorry," she said, "but would you mind not walking on the beach?"

This was sudden. I had intended to retire and leave the beach to her, but I did not fancy being driven away so abruptly.

"I was about to withdraw, madam," said I, bowing stiffly; "I beg you will pardon any inconvenience——"

"Dear me!" she cried, "you don't understand. I do not—I would not think for a moment of asking you to leave Pine Inlet. I merely ventured to request that you walk on the dunes. I am so afraid that your footprints may obliterate the impressions that my father is studying."

"Oh!" said I, looking about me as though I had been caught in the middle of a flower-bed; "really I did not notice any impressions. Impressions of what—if I may be permitted?"

"I don't know," she said, smiling a little at my awkward pose. "If you step this way in a straight line you can do no damage."

I did as she bade me. I suppose my movements resembled the gait of a wet peacock. Possibly they recalled the delicate maneuvers of the kangaroo. Anyway, she laughed.

This seriously annoyed me. I had been at a disadvantage; I walk well enough when let alone.

"You can scarcely expect," said I, "that a man absorbed in his own ideas could notice impressions on the sand. I trust I have obliterated nothing."

As I said this, I looked back at the long line of footprints stretching away in prospective across the sand: They were my own. How large they looked!



Drawn by
B. West

THE PROFESSOR.

Was that what she was laughing at?

"I wish to explain," she said gravely, looking at the point of her parasol; "I am very sorry to be obliged to warn you—to ask you to forego the pleasure of strolling on a beach that does not belong to me. Perhaps," she continued, in sudden alarm, "perhaps this beach belongs to you?"

"The beach? Oh, no," I said.

"But—but you were going to write poems about it?"

"Only one—and that does not necessitate owning the beach. I have observed," said I frankly, "that the people who own nothing write many poems about it."

She looked at me seriously.

"I write many poems," I added.

She laughed doubtfully.

"Would you rather I went away?" I asked politely.

"I? Why, no—I mean that you may do as you please—except please do not walk on the beach."

"Then I do not alarm you by my presence?" I inquired. My clothes were a bit ancient. I wore them shooting, sometimes. "My family is respectable," I added. And I told her my name.

"Oh! Then you wrote 'Culled Cowslips' and 'Faded Fig-Leaves,' and you imitate Maeterlinck, and you—oh, I know lots of people that you know;" she cried with every symptom of relief; "and you know my brother."

"I am the author," said I coldly, "of 'Culled Cowslips,' but 'Faded Fig-Leaves' was an earlier work, which I no longer recognize, and I should be grateful to you if you would be kind enough to deny that I ever imitated Maeterlinck. Possibly," I added "he imitates me."

"Now, do you know," she said, "I was afraid of you at first? Papa is digging in the salt meadows nearly a mile away."

It was hard to bear.

"Can you not see," said I, "that I am wearing a shooting coat?"

"I do see—now—but it is so—so old," she pleaded.

"It is a shooting coat all the same," I said bitterly.

She was very quiet, and I saw she was sorry.

"Never mind," I said, magnanimously, "you probably are not familiar with sporting goods. If I knew your name I should ask permission to present myself."

"Why I am Daisy Holroyd," she said.

"What! Jack Holroyd's little sister—"

"Little!" she cried.

"I didn't mean that," said I; "you know that your brother and I were great friends in Paris——"

"I know," she said significantly.

"Ahem! Of course," I said, "Jack and I were inseparable——"

"Except when shut in separate cells," said Miss Holroyd, coldly.

This unfeeling allusion to the unfortunate termination of a Latin-Quarter celebration hurt me.

"The police," said I, "were too officious."

"So Jack says," replied Miss Holroyd, demurely.

We had unconsciously moved on along the sand hills, side by side, as we spoke.

"To think," I repeated, "that I should meet Jack's little——"

"Please," she said, "you are only three years my senior."

She opened the sunshade and tipped it over one shoulder. It was white, and had spots and posies on it.

"Jack sends us every new book you write," she observed. "I do not approve of some things you write."

"Modern school," I mumbled.

"That is no excuse," she said, severely;

"Anthony Trollop didn't do it."

The foam spume from the breakers was drifting across the dunes, and the little tip-up snipe ran along the beach and teetered and whistled and spread their white-barred wings for a low, straight flight across the shingle, only to tip and skeep, and sail on again. The salt sea wind whistled and curled through the crested waves, blowing in perfumed puffs across thickets of sweet-bay and cedar. As we passed through the crackling juicy-stemmed marsh weed, myriads of fiddler-crabs raised their foreclaws in warning and backed away, rustling, through the reeds, aggressive, protesting.

"Like millions of pigny Ajaxes defying the lightning," I said.

Miss Holroyd laughed.

"Now I never imagined that authors were clever except in print," she said.

She was a most extraordinary girl.

"I suppose," she observed, after a moment's silence; "I suppose I am taking you to my father."

"Delighted," I mumbled. "H'm! I had the honor of meeting Professor Holroyd in Paris."

"Yes; he bailed you and Jack out," said Miss Holroyd, serenely.

The silence was too painful to last.

"Captain McPeck is an interesting

man," I said. I spoke more loudly than I intended; I may have been nervous.

"Yes," said Daisy Holroyd, "but he has a most singular hotel clerk."

"You mean Mr. Frisby?"

"I do."

"Yes," I admitted, "Mr. Frisby is queer. He was once a bill-poster."

"I know it!" exclaimed Daisy Holroyd, with some heat. "He ruins landscapes whenever he has an opportunity. Do you know that he has a passion for bill-posting? He has; he posts bills for the pure pleasure of it, just as you play golf, or tennis, or billiards."

"But he's a hotel clerk now," I said; "nobody employs him to post bills."

"I know it! He does it all by himself for the pure pleasure of it. Papa has engaged him to come down here for two weeks, and I dread it," said the girl.

What Professor Holroyd might want of Frisby I had not the faintest notion. I suppose Miss Holroyd noticed the bewilderment in my face, for she laughed and nodded her head twice.

"Not only Mr. Frisby, but Captain McPeck also," she said.

"You don't mean to say that Captain McPeck is going to close his hotel!" I exclaimed.

My trunk was there. It contained guarantees of my respectability.

"Oh, no; his wife will keep it open," replied the girl. "Look! you can see papa now. He's digging."

"Where?" I blurted out.

I remembered Professor Holroyd as a prim, spectacled gentleman, with close-cut, snowy beard and a clerical allure. The man I saw digging wore green goggles, a jersey, a battered sou'wester and hip-boots of rubber. He was delving in the muck of the salt meadow, his face streaming with perspiration, his boots and jersey splashed with unpleasant-looking mud. He glanced up as we approached, shading his eyes with a sun-burnt hand.

"Papa, dear," said Miss Holroyd, "here is Jack's friend whom you bailed out of Mazas."

The introduction was startling. I turned crimson with mortification. The professor was very decent about it; he called me by name at once.

When he said this he looked at his spade. It was clear that he considered me a nuisance and wished to go on with his digging.

"I suppose," he said, "you are still writing?"

"A little," I replied, trying not to speak sarcastically. My output had rivaled that of "The Duchess"—in quantity, I mean.

"I seldom read—fiction," he said, looking restlessly at the hole in the ground.

Miss Holroyd came to my rescue.

"That was a charming story you wrote last," she said; "papa you should read it—you should, papa; it's all about a fossil."

We both looked narrowly at Miss Holroyd. Her smile was guileless.

"Fossils!" repeated the professor. "Do you care for fossils?"

"Very much," said I.

Now, I am not perfectly sure what my object was in lying. I looked at Daisy Holroyd's dark fringed eyes. They were very grave.

"Fossils," said I, "are my hobby."

I think Miss Holroyd winced a little at this. I did not care. I went on:

"I have seldom had the opportunity to study the subject, but, as a boy, I collected flint arrow-heads——"

"Flint arrow-heads!" said the professor coldly.

"Yes; they were the nearest things to fossils obtainable," I replied, marveling at my own mendacity.

The professor looked into the hole. I also looked. I could see nothing in it. "He's digging for fossils," thought I to myself.

"Perhaps," said the professor, cautiously, "you might wish to aid me in a little research—that is to say, if you have an inclination for fossils." The double-entendre was not lost upon me.

"I have read all your books so eagerly," said I, "that to join you—to be of service to you in any research, however difficult and trying, would be an honor and a privilege that I never dared to hope for."

"That," thought I to myself, "will do its own work. Ananias, take a rear seat!"

But the professor was still suspicious. How could he help it, when he remembered Jack's escapades, in which my name was always blended. Doubtless he was satis-

fied that my influence on Jack was evil. The contrary was the case, too.

"Fossils," he said, worrying the edges of the excavation with his spade, "fossils are not things to be lightly considered."

"No, indeed!" I protested.

"Fossils are the most interesting as well as puzzling things in the world," said he.

"They are!" I cried enthusiastically.

"But I am not looking for fossils," observed the professor mildly.

This was a facer. I looked at Daisy Holroyd. She bit her lip and fixed her eyes on the sea. Her eyes were wonderful eyes.

"Did you think I was digging for fossils in a salt meadow?" queried the professor; "you can have read very little about the subject. I am digging for something quite different."

I was silent. I knew that my face was a trifle flushed. I longed to say: "Well, what the devil are you digging for?" but I only stared into the hole as though hypnotized.

"Captain McPeck and Frisby ought to be here," he said, looking first at Daisy and then across the meadows.

I ached to ask him why he had subpoenaed Captain McPeck and Frisby.

"They are coming," said Daisy, shading her eyes; "do you see the speck on the meadows?"

"It may be a mud hen," said the professor.

"Miss Holroyd is right," I said. "A wagon and team and two men are coming from the north. There is a dog beside the wagon—it's that miserable yellow dog of Frisby's."

"Good gracious?" cried the professor, "you don't mean to tell me that you see all that at such a distance?"

"Why not?" I said.

"I see nothing," he insisted.

"You will see that I'm right, presently," I laughed.

The professor removed his blue goggles and rubbed them, glancing obliquely at me.

"Haven't you heard what extraordinary eyesight duck shooters have?" said his daughter, looking back at her father. "Jack says that they can tell exactly what kind of a duck is flying before most people could see anything at all in the sky."

"It's true," I said; "it comes to anybody, I fancy, who has had practice."

The professor regarded me with a new interest. There was inspiration in his eyes; he turned toward the ocean. For a long time he stared at the tossing waves on the beach, then he looked far out to where the horizon met the sea.

"Are there any ducks out there?" he asked at last.

"Yes," said I, scanning the sea; "there are."

He produced a pair of binoculars from his coat-tail pocket, adjusted them and raised them to his eyes.

"H'm! What sort of ducks?"

I looked more carefully, holding both hands over my forehead.

"Surf ducks—scoters and widgeon. There is one buffle-head among them—no, two; the rest are coots," I replied.

"This," cried the professor, "is most astonishing. I have good eyes but I can't see a blessed thing without these binoculars!"

"It's not extraordinary," said I, "the surf ducks and coots any novice might recognize; the widgeon and buffle-heads I should not have been able to name unless they had risen from the water. It is easy to tell any duck when it is flying, even though it looks no bigger than a black pin-point."

But the professor insisted that it was marvelous, and he said that I might render him invaluable service if I would consent to come and camp at Pine Inlet for a few weeks.

I looked at his daughter, but she turned her back—not exactly in disdain either. Her back was beautifully molded. Her gown fitted also.

"Camp out here?" I repeated, pretending to be unpleasantly surprised.

"I do not think he would care to," said Miss Holroyd without turning.

I had not expected that.

"Above all things," said I, in a clear, pleasant voice, "I like to camp out."

She said nothing.

"It is not exactly camping," said the professor; "come you shall see our conservatory. Daisy, come dear! you must put on a heavier frock, it is getting toward sundown."

At that moment, over a near dune, two horses' heads appeared, followed by two



Drawn by H. West Clinefort.

"MISS HOLROYD GAZED STEADILY AT THE BOARD."

human heads, then a wagon, then a yellow dog.

I turned triumphantly to the professor.

"You are the very man I want," he muttered; "the very man—the very man."

I looked at Daisy Holroyd. She returned my glance with a defiant little smile.

"Waal," said Captain McPeck, driving up, "here we be! Git out, Frisby."

Frisby, fat, nervous, and sentimental, hopped out of the cart.

"Come," said the professor, impatiently moving across the dunes. I walked with Daisy Holroyd. McPeck and Frisby followed. The yellow dog walked by himself.

II.

The sun was dipping into the sea as we trudged across the meadows toward a high dome-shaped dune, covered with cedars and thickets of sweet-bay. I saw no sign of habitation among the sand hills. Far as the eye could reach nothing broke the gray line of sea and sky, save the squat dunes crowned with stunted cedars.

Then, as we rounded the base of the dune, we almost walked into the door of a house. My amazement amused Miss Holroyd, and I noticed also a touch of malice in her pretty eyes. But she said nothing, following her father into the house, with the slightest possible gesture to me. Was it invitation, was it menace?

The house was merely a light wooden frame, covered with some water-proof stuff that looked like a mixture of rubber and tar. Over this—in fact, over the whole roof—was pitched an awning of heavy sail-cloth. I noticed that the house was anchored to the sand by chains, already rusted red. But this one-storied house was not the only building nestling in the south shelter of the big dune. A hundred feet away stood another structure—long, low, also built of wood. It had rows on rows of round port-holes on every side. The ports were fitted with heavy glass, hinged to swing open if necessary. A single big double door occupied the front.

Behind this long, low building was still another, a mere shed. Smoke rose from the sheet-iron chimney; there was somebody moving about inside the open door.

As I stood gaping at this mushroom

hamlet, the professor appeared at the door and asked me to enter. I stepped in at once.

The house was much larger than I had imagined. A straight hallway ran through the center from east to west. On either side of this hallway were rooms, the doors swinging wide open. I counted three doors on each side; the three on the south appeared to be bedrooms.

The professor ushered me into a room on the north side, where I found Captain McPeck and Frisby sitting at a table, upon which were drawings and sketches of articulated animals and fishes.

"You see, McPeck," said the professor, "we only wanted one more man and I think I've got him—haven't I?" turning eagerly to me.

"Why, yes," I said laughing; "this is delightful. Am I invited to stay here?"

"Your bedroom is the third on the south side; everything is ready. McPeck, you can bring his trunk to-morrow, can't you?" demanded the professor.

The red-faced captain nodded and shifted a quid.

"Then it's all settled," said the professor, and he drew a sigh of satisfaction. "You see," he said, turning to me, "I was at my wit's ends to know whom to trust. I never thought of you—Jack's out in China—and I didn't dare trust anybody in my own profession. All you care about is writing verses and stories, isn't it?"

"I like to shoot," I replied mildly.

"Just the thing!" he cried, beaming at us all in turn; "now I can see no reason why we should not progress rapidly. McPeck, you and Frisby must get those boxes up here before dark. Dinner will be ready before you have finished unloading. Dick, you will wish to go to your room first."

My name isn't Dick, but he spoke so kindly, and beamed upon me in such a fatherly manner, that I let it go. I had occasion to correct him afterward, several times, but he always forgot the next minute. He calls me Dick to this day.

It was dark when Professor Holroyd, his daughter and I sat down to dinner. The room was the same in which I had noticed the drawings of beast and bird, but the round table had been extended

into an oval, and neatly spread with dainty linen and silver.

A fresh-cheeked Swedish girl appeared from a further room, bearing the soup. The professor ladled it out, still beaming.

"Now, this is very delightful, isn't it, Daisy?" he said.

"Very," said Miss Holroyd, with the faintest tinge of irony.

"Very," I repeated, heartily. But I looked at my soup when I said it.

"I suppose," said the professor, nodding mysteriously at his daughter, "that Dick knows nothing of what we're about down here?"

"I suppose," said Miss Holroyd, "that he thinks we are digging for fossils."

I looked at my plate. She might have spared me that.

"Well, well," said her father, smiling to himself, "he shall know everything by morning. You'll be astonished, Dick, my boy."

"His name isn't Dick," corrected Daisy.

The professor said, "Isn't it?" in an absent-minded way, and relapsed into contemplation of my necktie.

I asked Miss Holroyd a few questions about Jack, and was informed that he had given up law and entered the diplomatic service—as what I did not dare ask, for I knew what our diplomatic service was.

"In China," said Daisy.

"Choo Choo is the name of the city," added her father, proudly; "it's the terminus of the new trans-Siberian railway."

"It's on the Yellow River," said Daisy.

"He's vice-consul," added the professor, triumphantly.

"He'll make a good one," I observed. I knew Jack; I pitied his consul.

So we chatted on about my old playmate until Freda, the red-cheeked maid, brought coffee, and the professor lighted a cigar, with a little bow to his daughter.

"Of course, you don't smoke," she said to me, with a glimmer of malice in her eyes.

"He mustn't," interposed the professor, hastily; "it will make his hand tremble."

"No, it doesn't," said I, laughing; "but my hand will shake if I don't smoke. Are you going to employ me as a draughtsman?"

"You'll know to-morrow," he chuckled,

with a mysterious smile at his daughter.

"Daisy, give him my best cigars; put the box here on the table. We can't afford to have his hand tremble."

Miss Holroyd rose and crossed the hallway to her father's room, returning presently with a box of promising-looking cigars.

"I don't think he knows what is good for him," she said; "he should smoke only one every day."

It was hard to bear. I am not vindictive, but I decided to treasure up a few of Miss Holroyd's gentle taunts. My intimacy with her brother was certainly a disadvantage to me now. Jack had apparently been talking too much, and his sister appeared to be thoroughly acquainted with my past. It was a disadvantage. I remembered her vaguely as a girl with long braids, who used to come on Sundays with her father and take tea with us in our rooms. Then she went to Germany to school, and Jack and I employed our Sunday evenings otherwise. It is true that I regarded her weekly visits as a species of infliction, but I did not think I ever showed it.

"It is strange," said I, "that you did not recognize me at once, Miss Holroyd. Have I changed so greatly in five years?"

"You wore a pointed French beard in Paris," she said; "a very downy one. And you never stayed to tea but twice, and then you only spoke once."

"Oh," said I, blankly. "What did I say?"

"You asked me if I liked plums," said Daisy, bursting into an irresistible ripple of laughter.

I saw that I must have made the same sort of an ass of myself that most boys of eighteen do.

It was too bad; I never thought about the future in those days. Who could have imagined that little Daisy Holroyd would have grown up into this bewildering young lady? It was really too bad. Presently the professor retired to his room, carrying with him an armful of drawings and bidding us not to sit up late. When he closed his door, Miss Holroyd turned to me.

"Papa will work over those drawings until midnight," she said, with a despairing smile.

"It isn't good for him," I said. "What are the drawings?"

"You may know to-morrow," she answered, leaning forward on the table and shading her face with one hand. "Tell me about yourself and Jack in Paris."

I looked at her suspiciously.

"What! There isn't much to tell; we studied—Jack went to the law-school, and I attended—er—oh, all sorts of schools."

"Did you? Surely you gave yourself a little recreation occasionally?"

"Occasionally," I nodded.

"I am afraid you and Jack studied too hard."

"That may be," said I, looking meek.

"Especially about fossils."

I couldn't stand that.

"Miss Holroyd," I said, "I do care for fossils—you may think that I am a humbug, but I have a perfect mania for fossils—now."

"Since when?"

"About an hour ago," I said airily. Out of the corner of my eye I saw that she had flushed up. It pleased me.

"You will soon tire of the experiment," she said, with a dangerous smile.

"Oh, I may," I replied indifferently.

She drew back; the movement was scarcely perceptible, but I noticed it, and she knew I did.

The atmosphere was vaguely hostile. One feels such mental conditions and changes instantly. I picked up a chess-board, opened it, set up the pieces with elaborate care and began to move, first the white, then the red. Miss Holroyd watched me coldly at first, but after a dozen moves she became interested and leaned a shade nearer. I moved a black pawn forward.

"Why do you do that?" said Daisy.

"Because," said I, "the white queen threatens the pawn."

"It was an aggressive move," she insisted.

"Purely defensive," I said. "If her white highness will let the pawn alone, the pawn will let the queen alone."

Miss Holroyd rested her chin on her wrist and gazed steadily at the board. She was flushing furiously, but she held her ground.

"If the white queen doesn't block that pawn, the pawn may become dangerous," she said, coldly.

I laughed and closed up the board with a snap.

"True," I said, "it might even take the queen." After a moment's silence I asked: "What would you do in that case, Miss Holroyd?"

"I should resign," she said serenely; then realizing what she had said, she lost her self-possession for a second and cried: "No, indeed! I should fight to the bitter end! I mean——"

"What?" I asked, lingering over my revenge.

"I mean," she said slowly, "that your black pawn would never have the chance—never! I should take it immediately."

"I believe you would," said I, smiling; "so we'll call the game yours and—the pawn captured."

"I don't want it," she exclaimed. "A pawn is worthless."

"Except when it's in the king row."

"Chess is most interesting," she observed, sedately. She had completely recovered her self-control. Still I saw that she now had a certain respect for my defensive powers. It was very soothing to me.

"You know," said I gravely, "that I am fonder of Jack than of anybody. That's the reason we never write each other, except to borrow things. I am afraid that when I was a young cub in France I was not an attractive personality."

"On the contrary," said Daisy, smiling, "I thought you were very big and very perfect. I had illusions. I wept often when I went home and remembered that you never took the trouble to speak to me but once."

"I was a cub," I said; "not selfish and brutal—but I didn't understand school-girls—I never had any sisters—and I didn't know what to say to very young girls. If I had imagined that you felt hurt——"

"Oh, I did—five years ago. Afterward I laughed at the whole thing."

"Laughed?" I repeated, vaguely disappointed.

"Why, of course. I was very easily hurt when I was a child. I think I have outgrown it."

The soft curve of her sensitive mouth contradicted her.

"Will you forgive me now?" I asked.



FRISBY.

"Yes. I had forgotten the whole thing until I met you an hour or so ago."

There was something that had a ring not entirely genuine in this speech. I noticed it, but forgot it the next moment.

"Tiger cubs have stripes," said I; selfishness blossoms in the cradle and prophecy is not difficult. I hope I am not more selfish than my brothers."

"I hope not," she said, smiling.

Presently she rose, touched her hair with the tip of one finger, and walked to the door.

"Good-night," she said, curtsying very low.

"Good-night," said I, opening the door for her to pass.

III.

The sea was a sheet of silver, tinged with pink; the tremendous arch of the sky was all shimmering and glimmering with the promise of the sun. Already the mist above, flecked with clustered clouds, flushed with rose color and dull gold. I heard the low splash of the waves breaking and curling across the beach; a

wandering breeze, fresh and fragrant, blew the curtains of my window; there was the scent of sweet-bay in the room, and everywhere the subtile, nameless perfume of the sea.

When at last I stood upon the shore, the air and sea were all aglimmer in a rosy light, deepening to crimson in the zenith. Along the beach I saw a little cove, shelving and all ashine, where shallow waves washed with a mellow sound. Fine as dusted gold the shingle glowed, and the thin film of water rose, receded, crept up again a little higher, and again flowed back, with the low hiss of snowy foam and gilded bubbles breaking.

I stood a little while quiet, my eyes upon the water, the invitation of the ocean in my ears, vague and sweet as the murmur of a shell. Then I looked at my bathing suit and towels.

"In we go!" said I aloud. A second later and the prophecy was fulfilled.

I swam far out to sea, and, as I swam, the waters all around me turned to gold. The sun had risen.

There is a fragrance in the sea at dawn

that none can name. White thorn abloom in May, sedges asway and scented rushes rustling in an inland wind recall the sea to me—I can't say why.

Far out at sea I raised myself, swung around, dived, and set out again for shore, striking strong strokes until the flecked foam flew. And when at last I shot through the breakers, I laughed aloud and sprang upon the beach, breathless and happy. Then from the ocean came another cry, clear, joyous, and a white arm rose in the air.

She came drifting in with the waves like a white sea-sprite, laughing at me from her tangled hair, and I plunged into the breakers again to join her.

Side by side, we swam along the coast, just outside the breakers, until, in the next cove, we saw the flutter of her maid's cap-strings.

"I will beat you to breakfast!" she cried, as I rested, watching her glide up along the beach.

"Done," said I, "for a sea-shell!"

"Done!" she called across the water.

I made good speed along the shore, and I was not long in dressing, but when I entered the dining-room she was there, demure, smiling, exquisite in her cool, white frock.

"The sea-shell is yours," said I; "I hope I can find one with a pearl in it."

The professor hurried in before she could reply. He greeted me very cordially, but there was an abstracted air about him, and he called me Dick until I recognized that remonstrance was useless. He was not long over his coffee and rolls.

"McPeck and Frisby will return with the last load, including your trunk, by early afternoon," he said, rising and picking up his bundle of drawings. "I haven't time to explain to you what we are doing, Dick, but Daisy will take you about and instruct you. She will give you the rifle standing in my room—it's a good Winchester; I have sent for an 'Express' for you, big enough to knock over any elephant in India. Daisy, take him through the sheds and tell him everything. Luncheon is at noon. Do you usually take luncheon, Dick?"

"When I'm permitted," I smiled.

"Well," said the professor, doubtfully, "you mustn't come back here for it.

Freda can take you what you want. Is your hand unsteady after eating?"

"Why, papa!" said Daisy. "Do you intend to starve him?"

We all laughed.

The professor tucked his drawings into a capacious pocket, pulled his sea-boots up to his hips, seized a spade and left, nodding to us as though he were thinking of something else.

We went to the door and watched him across the salt meadows until a distant sand dune hid him.

"Come," said Daisy Holroyd, "I am going to take you to the shop."

She put on a broad-brimmed straw hat, a distractingly pretty combination of filmy cool stuffs, and led the way to the long low structure that I had noticed the evening before.

The interior was lighted by the numberless little port-holes, and I could see everything plainly. I acknowledge I was nonplussed by what I did see.

In the center of the shed, which must have been at least a hundred feet long, stood what I thought at first was the skeleton of an enormous whale. After a moment's silent contemplation of the thing, I saw that it could not be a whale, for the frames of two gigantic bat-like wings rose from each shoulder. Also I noticed that the animal possessed legs—four of them—with most unpleasant looking webbed claws, fully eight feet long. The bony framework of the head, too, resembled something between a crocodile and a monstrous snapping turtle. The walls of the shanty were hung with drawings and blue prints. A man, dressed in white linen, was tinkering with the vertebrae of the lizard-like tail.

"Where on earth did such a reptile come from?" I asked at length.

"Oh, it's not real," said Daisy, scornfully; "it's papier-maché."

"I see," said I; "a stage prop."

"A what?" asked Daisy, in hurt astonishment.

"Why a—a sort of Siegfried dragon—a what's his name—er Pfafner, or Peffer, or——"

"If my father heard you say such things he would dislike you," said Daisy. She looked grieved and moved toward the door. I apologized—for what, I knew not—and we became reconciled. She ran into

her father's room and brought me the rifle, a very good Winchester. She also gave me a cartridge-belt, full.

"Now," she smiled, "I shall take you to your observatory, and when we arrive, you are to begin your duty at once."

"And that duty?" I ventured, shouldering the rifle.

"That duty is to watch the ocean. I shall then explain the whole affair—but you mustn't look at me while I speak, you must watch the sea."

"This," said I, "is hardship. I had rather go without the luncheon."

I do not think she was offended at my speech. Still she frowned for almost three seconds.

We passed through acres of sweet-bay and spear-grass, sometimes skirting thickets of twisted cedars, sometimes walking in the full glare of the morning sun, sinking into shifting sand where sun-scorched shells crackled under our feet, and sun-browned sea-weed glistened, bronzed and iridescent. Then, as we climbed a little hill, the sea wind freshened in our faces, and lo! the ocean lay below us, far-stretching as the eye could reach, glittering, magnificent.

Daisy sat down flat on the sand. It takes a clever girl to do that and retain the respectful deference due her from men. It takes a graceful girl to accomplish it triumphantly when a man is looking.

"You must sit beside me," she said—as though it would prove irksome to me.

"Now," she continued, "you must watch the water while I am talking."

I nodded.

"Why don't you do it, then?" she asked.

I succeeded in wrenching my head toward the ocean, although I felt sure it would swing gradually round again in spite of me.

"To begin with," said Daisy Holroyd, "there's a thing in that ocean that would astonish you if you saw it. Turn your head!"

"I am," I said meekly.

"Did you hear what I said?"

"Yes—er—a thing in the ocean that's going to astonish me." Visions of mermaids rose before me.

"The thing," said Daisy, "is a Thermosaurus!"

I nodded vaguely as though antici-

pating a delightful introduction to a nautical friend.

"You don't seem astonished," she said reproachfully.

"Why should I be?" I asked.

"Please turn your eyes toward the water. Suppose a Thermosaurus should look out of the waves!"

"Well," said I, "in that case the pleasure would be mutual."

She frowned and bit her upper lip.

"Do you know what a Thermosaurus is?" she asked.

"If I am to guess," said I, "I guess it's a jelly-fish."

"It's that big, ugly, horrible creature that I showed you in the shed!" cried Daisy impatiently.

"Eh!" I stammered.

"Not papier-maché either," she continued excitedly; "it's a real one!"

This was pleasant news. I glanced instinctively at my rifle and then at the ocean.

"Well," said I at last, "it strikes me that you and I resemble a pair of Andromedas waiting to be swallowed. This rifle won't stop a beast, a live beast, like that Niebelungen dragon of yours."

"Yes, it will," she said, "it's not an ordinary rifle."

Then, for the first time, I noticed, just below the magazine, a cylindrical attachment that was strange to me.

"Now, if you will watch the sea very carefully, and will promise not to look at me," said Daisy, "I will try to explain."

She did not wait for me to promise, but went on eagerly, a sparkle of excitement in her blue eyes:

"You know, of all the fossil remains of the great bat-like and lizard-like creatures that inhabited the earth ages and ages ago, the bones of the gigantic saurians are the most interesting. I think they used to splash about the water and fly over the land during the carboniferous period; anyway, it doesn't matter. Of course, you have seen pictures of reconstructed creatures such as the Ichtheosaurus, the Plesiosaurus, the Anthracosaurus and the Thermosaurus?"

I nodded, trying to keep my eyes on hers.

"And you know that the remains of the Thermosaurus were first discovered and reconstructed by papa?"

"Yes," said I. There was no use in saying no.

"I am glad you do. Now, papa has proved that this creature lived entirely in the Gulf Stream, emerging for occasional flights across an ocean or two. Can you imagine how he proved it!"

"No," said I, resolutely pointing my nose at the ocean.

"He proved it by a minute examination of the microscopical shells found among the ribs of the *Thermosaurus*. These shells contained little creatures that live only in the warm waters of the Gulf Stream. They were the food of the *Thermosaurus*."

"It was rather slender rations for a thing like that, wasn't it? Did he ever swallow bigger food—er—men?"

"Oh, yes; tons of fossil bones from prehistoric men are also found in the interior of the *Thermosaurus*."

"Then," said I, "you, at least, had better go back to Captain McPeck's——"

"Please turn around; don't be so foolish. I didn't say there was a *live Thermosaurus* in the water, did I?"

"Isn't there?"

"Why, no!"

My relief was genuine, but I thought of the rifle and looked suspiciously out to sea.

"What's the Winchester for," I asked.

"Listen and I will explain. Papa has found out—how I do not exactly understand—that there is in the waters of the Gulf Stream the body of a *Thermosaurus*. The creature must have been alive within a year or so. The impenetrable scale armor that covers its body has, as far as papa knows, prevented its disintegration. We know that it is there still, or was there within a few months. Papa has reports and sworn depositions from steamer captains and seamen from a dozen different vessels, all corroborating each other in essential details. These stories, of course, get into the newspapers—sea-serpent stories—but papa knows that they confirm his theory that the huge body of this reptile is swinging along somewhere on the Gulf Stream."

She opened her sun-shade and held it over her. I noticed that she deigned to give me the benefit of about one-eighth of it.

"Your duty with that rifle is this: If we are fortunate enough to see the body of the *Thermosaurus* come floating by, you are to take good aim and fire—fire rapidly every bullet in the magazine; then reload and fire again and reload and fire as long as you have any cartridges left."

"A self-feeding Maxim is what I should have," I said with gentle sarcasm.

"Well, and suppose I make a sieve of this big lizard?"

"Do you see these rings in the sand?" she asked.

Sure enough somebody had driven heavy piles deep into the sand all around us, and to the tops of these piles were attached steel rings, half buried under the spear-grass. We sat almost exactly in the center of a circle of these rings.

"The reason is this," said Daisy, "every bullet in your cartridges is steel-tipped and armor-piercing. To the base of each bullet is attached a thin wire of palladium. Palladium is that new metal, a thread of which, drawn out into finest wire, will hold a ton of iron suspended. Every bullet is fitted with minute coils of miles of this wire. When the bullet leaves the rifle it spins out this wire as a shot from a life-saver's mortar spins out and carries the life line to a wrecked ship. The end of each coil of wire is attached to that cylinder under the magazine of your rifle. As soon as the shell is automatically ejected this wire flies out also. A bit of scarlet tape is fixed to the end so that it will be easy to pick up. There is also a snap clasp on the end, and this clasp fits those rings that you see in the sand. Now, when you begin firing, it is my duty to run and pick up the wire ends and attach them to the rings. Then, you see, we have the body of the *Thermosaurus* full of bullets, every bullet anchored to the shore by tiny wires, each of which could easily hold three tons strain."

I looked at her in amazement.

"Then," she added calmly, "we have captured the *Thermosaurus*."

"Your father," said I at length, "must have spent years of labor over this preparation."

"It is the work of a lifetime," she said simply.

My face, I suppose, showed my misgivings.



Drawn by H. West Chudown.

"THERE'S A THING IN THAT OCEAN THAT WOULD ASTONISH YOU IF YOU SAW IT."

"It must not fail," she added.

"But—but we are nowhere near the Gulf Stream," I ventured.

Her face brightened, and she frankly held the sun-shade over us both.

"Ah, you don't know," she said, "what else papa has discovered. Would you believe that he has found a loop in the Gulf Stream—a genuine loop—that swings in here just outside of the breakers below? It is true! Everybody on Long Island knows that there is a warm current off the coast, but nobody imagined it was merely a sort of back-water from the Gulf Stream that formed a great circular mill-race around the cone of a subterranean volcano, and rejoined the Gulf Stream off Cape Albatross. But it is! That is why papa bought a yacht three years ago and sailed about for two years so mysteriously. Oh, I did want to go with him so much!"

"This," said I, "is most astonishing."

She leaned enthusiastically toward me, her lovely face aglow.

"Isn't it?" she said; "and to think that you and papa and I are the only people in the whole world who know this!"

To be included in such a trilogy was very delightful.

"Papa is writing the whole thing—I mean about the currents. He also has in preparation sixteen volumes on the Thermosaurus. He said this morning that he was going to ask you to write the story first for some scientific magazine. He is certain that Professor Bruce Stoddard, of Columbia, will write the pamphlets necessary. This will give papa time to attend to the sixteen-volume work, which he expects to finish in three years.

"Let us first," said I, laughing, "catch our Thermosaurus."

"We must not fail," she said, wistfully.

"We shall not fail!" I said; "for I promise to sit on this sand hill as long as I live—until a Thermosaurus appears—if that is your wish, Miss Holroyd."

Our eyes met for an instant. She did not chide me either for not looking at the ocean. Her eyes were bluer, anyway.

"I suppose," she said, bending her head and absently pouring sand between her fingers—"I suppose you think me a blue-stocking or something odious."

"Not exactly," I said. There was an emphasis in my voice that made her color. After a moment she laid the sun-shade down, still open.

"May I hold it?" I asked.

She nodded almost imperceptibly.

The ocean had turned a deep marine blue, verging on purple, that heralded a scorching afternoon. The wind died away; the odor of cedar and sweet-bay hung heavy in the air.

In the sand at our feet, an iridescent flower-beetle crawled, its metallic green and blue wings burning like a spark. Great gnats, with filmy, glittering wings, danced aimlessly above the young golden-rod; burnished crickets, inquisitive, timid, ran from under chips of drift-wood, waved their antennae at us, and ran back again. One by one, the marbled tiger-beetles tumbled at our feet, dazed from the exertion of an aerial flight, then scrambled and ran a little way, or darted into the wire-grass, where great brilliant spiders eyed them askance from their gossamer hammocks.

Far out at sea the white gulls floated and drifted on the water or sailed up into the air to flap lazily for a moment, and settle back among the waves. Strings of black surf ducks passed, their strong wings tipping the surface of the water; single wandering coots whirled from the breakers into lonely flight toward the horizon.

(To be continued.)





Drawn by
E. West Cleveland.

A MATTER OF INTEREST.

BY ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.

III.—Continued.

WE lay and watched the little ring-necks running along the water's edge, now backing away from the incoming tide, now boldly wading after the undertow. The harmony of silence, the deep perfume, the mystery of waiting for that something that all await—what is it?—love?—death?—or only the miracle of another morrow?—troubled me with vague restlessness. As sunlight casts shadows, happiness, too, throws a shadow, and the shadow is sadness.

And so the morning wore away until Freda came with a cool-looking hamper. Then delicious cold fowl and lettuce sandwiches and champagne-cup set our tongues wagging as only very young tongues can wag. Daisy went back with Freda after luncheon, leaving me a case of cigars, with a bantering smile. Then I dozed, half awake, keeping a partly closed eye on the ocean, where a faint gray streak showed

plainly amid the azure water all around. That was the Gulf Stream loop.

About four o'clock Frisby appeared with a bamboo shelter tent, for which I was unaffectedly grateful.

After he had erected it over me, he stopped to chat a bit, but the conversation bored me, for he could talk of nothing but bill-posting.

"You wouldn't ruin the landscape here, would you?" I asked.

"Ruin it," repeated Frisby nervously, "it's ruined now; there ain't a place to stick a bill."

"The snipe stick bills—in the sand," I said flippantly.

There was no humor about Frisby. "Do they?" he asked.

I moved with a certain impatience.

"Bills," said Frisby, "give spice an' variety to nature. They break the monotony of the everlastin' green and what-you-may-call-its."

I glared at him.

"Bills," he continued, "are not easy to stick, lemme tell you, sir. Sign-paintin's a soft snap when it comes to bill-stickin'. Now, I guess I've stuck more bills in New York state than ennybody."

"Have you?" I said angrily.

"Yes, siree. I always pick out the purtiest spots—kinder filled chuck full of woods and brooks and things; then I histe my paste-pot onto a rock and I slather that rock with gum, and whoop she goes!"

"Whoop what goes?"

"The bill; I paste her onto the rock with one swipe of the brush for the edges and a back-handed swipe for the finish—except when a bill is folded in two halves."

"And what do you do then?" I asked, disgusted.

"Swipe twice," said Frisby, with enthusiasm.

"And you don't think it injures the landscape?"

"Injures it!" he exclaimed, convinced that I was attempting to joke. I looked wearily out to sea. He also looked at the water and sighed sentimentally.

"Floatin' buoys with bills unto 'em is an idea of mine," he observed. "That damn ocean is monotonous, ain't it?"

I don't know what I might have done to Frisby—the rifle was so convenient—if his mean yellow dog had not waddled up at this juncture.

"Hi, Davy, sic 'em!" said Frisby, expectorating upon a clam-shell and hurling it seaward. The cur watched the flight of the shell apathetically, then squatted in the sand and looked at his master.

"Kinder lost his spirit," said Frisby, "ain't he? I once stuck a bill on Davy, an' it come off, an' the paste sorter sickened him. He was hell on rats—once."

After a moment or two Frisby took himself off, whistling cheerfully to Davy, who followed him when he was ready. The rifle burned in my fingers.

It was nearly six o'clock when the professor appeared, spade on shoulder, boots smeared with mud.

"Well!" he said; "nothing to report, Dick, my boy?"

"Nothing, professor."

He wiped his shining face with his handkerchief and stared at the water.

"My calculations lead me to believe," he said, "that our prize may be due any day now. This theory I base upon the result of the report from the last sea captain I saw. I cannot understand why some of these captains did not take the carcass in tow. They all say that they tried, but that the body sank before they could come within half a mile. The truth is probably that they did not stir a foot from their course to examine the thing."

"Have you ever cruised about for it?" I ventured.

"For two years," he said grimly. "It's no use; it's accident when a ship falls in with it. One captain reports it a thousand miles from where the last skipper spoke it, and always in the Gulf Stream. They think it is a different specimen every time, and the papers are teeming with sea-serpent fol-de-rol."

"Are you sure," I asked, "that it will swing in to the coast on this Gulf Stream loop?"

"I think I may say that it is certain to do so. I experimented with a dead right whale. You may have heard of its coming ashore here last summer."

"I think I did," said I, with a faint smile. The thing had poisoned the air for miles around.

"But," I continued, "suppose it comes in the night?"

He laughed.

"There I am lucky. Every night this month, and every day too, the current of the loop runs inland so far that even a porpoise would strand for at least twelve hours. Longer than that I have not experimented with, but I know that the shore-trend of the loop runs across a long spur of the submerged volcanic mountain, and that anything heavier than a porpoise would scrape the bottom and be carried so slowly that at least twelve hours must elapse before the carcass could float again into deep water. There are chances of its stranding indefinitely too, but I don't care to take those chances. That is why I have stationed you here, Dick, my boy."

He glanced again at the water, smiling to himself.

"There is another question I want to ask," I said, "if you don't mind."

"Of course not!" he said warmly.

"What are you digging for?"



"THAT NIGHT DAISY TOOK HER GUITAR TO THE SANDS AND SANG."

"Why, simply for exercise. The doctor told me I was killing myself with my sedentary habits, so I decided to dig. I don't know a better exercise; do you?"

"I suppose not," I murmured, rather red in the face. I wondered whether he would think me a species of Paul Pry. I wondered whether he'd mention fossils.

"Did Daisy tell you why we are making our papier-maché *Thermosaurus*?" he asked.

I shook my head.

"We constructed that from measurements I took from the fossil remains of the *Thermosaurus* in the Metropolitan Museum. Professor Bruce Stoddard made the drawings. We set it up here, all ready to receive the skin of the carcass that I am expecting."

We had started toward home, walking slowly across the darkening dunes, shoulder to shoulder. The sand was deep, and walking was not easy.

"I wish," said I at last, "that I knew why Miss Holroyd asked me not to walk on the beach. It's much less fatiguing."

"That," said the professor, "is a matter that I intend to discuss with you to-night." He spoke gravely, almost sadly. I felt that something of unparalleled importance was soon to be revealed. So I kept very quiet, watching the ocean out of the corners of my eyes.

IV.

Dinner was ended. Daisy Holroyd lighted her father's pipe for him, and insisted on my smoking as much as I pleased. Then she sat down and folded her hands like a good little girl, waiting for her father to make the revelation, which I felt in my bones must be something out of the ordinary.

The professor smoked for a while, gazing meditatively at his daughter; then, fixing his gray eyes on me, he said:

"Have you ever heard of the Kree—that Australian bird, half parrot, half hawk, that destroys so many sheep in New South Wales?"

I nodded.

"The Kree kills a sheep by alighting on its back and tearing away the flesh with its hooked beak until a vital part is reached. You know that? Well, it has been discovered that the Kree had prehis-

toric prototypes. These birds were enormous creatures, who preyed upon Mammoths and Mastadons, and even upon the great Saurians. It has been conclusively proven that a few Saurians have been killed by these ancestors of the Kree, but the favorite food of these birds was undoubtedly the *Thermosaurus*. It is believed that the birds attacked the eyes of the *Thermosaurus*, and when, as was its habit, the mammoth creature turned on its back to claw them, they fell upon the thinner scales of its stomach armor and finally killed it. This, of course, is a theory, but we have almost absolute proofs of its correctness. Now, these two birds are known among scientists as the *Eka*-bird and the *Ool-Yllik*. The names are Australian, in which country most of their remains have been unearthed. They lived during the carboniferous period. Now, it is not generally known, but the fact is, that in 1801 Captain Ransom, of the British exploring vessel '*Gull*,' purchased from the natives of Tasmania the skin of an *Eka*-bird that could not have been killed more than twenty-four hours previous to its sale. I saw this skin in the British Museum. It was labeled '*unknown bird, probably extinct*.' It took me exactly a week to satisfy myself that it was actually the skin of an *Eka*-bird. But that is not all, Dick, my boy," continued the professor excitedly. "In 1854 Admiral Stuart, of our own navy, saw the carcass of a strange gigantic bird floating along the southern coast of Australia. Sharks were after it, and, before a boat could be lowered, these miserable fish got it. But the good old admiral secured a few feathers and sent them to the Smithsonian. I saw them. They were not even labeled, but I knew that they were the feathers from either the *Eka*-bird or its near relative, the *Ool-Yllik*."

I had grown so interested that I had leaned far across the table. Daisy, too, bent forward. It was only when the professor paused for a moment that I noticed how close together our heads were—Daisy's and mine. I don't think she realized it; she didn't move.

"Now comes the important part of this long discourse," said the professor, smiling at our eagerness. "Ever since the carcass of our derelict *Thermosaurus* was

first noticed, every captain who has seen it has also reported the presence of one or more gigantic birds in the neighborhood. These birds, at a great distance, appeared to be hovering over the carcass, but, on the approach of a vessel, they disappeared. Even in mid-ocean they were observed. When I heard about it I was puzzled. A month later I was satisfied that neither the Ekaf-bird nor the Ool-Yllik was extinct. Last Monday I knew that I was right. I found forty-eight distinct impressions of the huge seven-toed claw of the Ekaf-bird on the beach here at Pine Inlet. You may imagine my excitement. I succeeded in digging up enough wet sand around one of these impressions to preserve its form. I managed to get it into a soap box, and now it is there in my shop. The tide rose too rapidly for me to save the other footprints."

I shuddered at the possibility of a clumsy misstep on my part obliterating the impression of an Ool-Yllik.

"That is the reason that my daughter warned you off the beach," he said mildly.

"Hanging would have been too good for the vandal who destroyed such priceless prizes!" I cried out in self-reproach.

Daisy Holroyd turned a flushed face to mine and impulsively laid her hand on my sleeve.

"How could you know?" she said.

"It's all right now," said her father, emphasizing each word with a gentle tap of his pipe-bowl on the table edge; "don't be hard on yourself, Dick, my boy. You'll do yeoman's service yet."

It was nearly midnight, and still we chatted on about the *Thermosaurus*, the Ekaf-bird and the

Ool-Yllik, eagerly discussing the probability of the great reptile's carcass being in the vicinity. That alone seemed to explain the presence of these prehistoric birds at Pine Inlet.

"Do they ever attack human beings?" I asked.

The professor looked startled.

"Gracious!" he exclaimed, "I never thought of that. And Daisy running about out of doors—dear me! It takes a scientist to be an unnatural parent!"

His alarm was half real, half assumed; but all the same he glanced gravely at us both, shaking his handsome head, ab-



"SHE CROPT IN ON HER HANDS AND KNEES."

sorbed in thought. Daisy herself looked a little doubtful. As for me, my sensations were distinctly queer.

"It is true," said the professor, frowning at the wall, "that human remains have been found associated with the bones of the Ekaf-bird—I don't know how intimately. It is a matter to be taken into most serious consideration."

"The problem can be solved," said I, "in several ways. One is to keep Miss Holroyd in the house——"

"I shall not stay in!" cried Daisy, indignantly.

We all laughed, and her father assured her that she should not be abused.

"Even if I did stay in," she said, "one of these birds might alight on Master Dick."

She looked saucily at me as she spoke, but turned crimson when her father observed quietly, "You don't seem to think of me, Daisy."

"Of course I do," she said, getting up and putting both arms around her father's neck; "but Dick—as—as you call him—is so helpless and timid."

My blissful smile froze on my lips.

"Timid!" I repeated.

She came back to the table, making me a mocking reverence.

"Do you think I am to be laughed at with impunity?" she said.

"What are your other plans, Dick, my boy?" asked the professor. "Daisy, let him alone, you little tease!"

"One is to haul a lot of cast-iron boilers along the dunes," I said. "If these birds come when the carcass floats in, and if they seem disposed to trouble us, we could crawl into the boilers and be safe."

"Why, that is really brilliant!" cried Daisy.

"Be quiet, my child! Dick, the plan is sound and sensible and perfectly practical. McPeck and Frisby shall go for a dozen loads of boilers to-morrow."

"It will spoil the beauty of the landscape," said Daisy, with a taunting nod to me.

"And Frisby will probably attempt to cover them with bill posters," I added, laughing.

"That," said Daisy, "I shall prevent, even at the cost of my life." And she stood up, looking very determined.

"Children, children," protested the

professor, "go to bed—you bother me."

Then I turned deliberately to Miss Holroyd.

"Good-night, Daisy," I said.

"Good-night, Dick," she said, very gently.

V.

The week passed quickly for me, leaving but few definite impressions. As I look back to it now I can see the long stretch of beach, burning in the fierce sunlight, the endless meadows, with the glimmer of water in the distance, the dunes, the twisted cedars, the leagues of scintillating ocean, rocking, rocking, always rocking. In the star-lit nights the curlew came in from the sand-bars by twos and threes; I could hear their faint call as I lay in bed thinking. All day long the little ring-necks whistled from the shore; the plover answered them from distant lonely inland pools; the great white gulls drifted like feathers upon the sea.

One morning toward the end of the week, I, strolling along the dunes, came upon Frisby. He was bill-posting. I caught him red-handed.

"This," said I, "must stop. Do you understand, Mr. Frisby?"

He stepped back from his work, laying his head on one side and considering first me, then the bill that he had pasted on one of our big boilers.

"Don't like the color?" he asked. "It goes well on them boilers."

"Color! No; I don't like the color either. Can't you understand that there are some people in the world who object to seeing patent medicine advertisements scattered over a landscape?"

"Hey?" he said, perplexed.

"Will you kindly remove that advertisement?" I persisted.

"Too late," said Frisby; "it's sot."

I was too disgusted to speak, but my disgust turned to anger when I perceived that, as far as the eye could reach, our boilers, lying from three to four hundred feet apart, were ablaze with yellow and red posters, extolling the "Eureka Liver Pill Company."

"It don't cost 'em nothin'," said Frisby cheerfully; "I done it fur the fun of it. Purty, ain't it?"

"They are Professor Holroyd's boilers," I said, subduing a desire to beat

Frisby with my telescope; "wait until Miss Holroyd sees this work."

"Don't she like yeller and red?" he demanded anxiously.

"You'll find out," said I.

Frisby gaped at his handiwork and then at his yellow dog. After a moment he mechanically spat on a clam-shell and requested Davy to "sic" it.

"Can't you comprehend that you have ruined our pleasure in the landscape?" I asked more mildly.

"I've got some green bills," said Frisby, "I kin stick 'em over the yaller ones——"

"Confound it!" said I, "it isn't the color!"

"Then," observed Frisby, "you don't like them pills. I've got some bills of the 'Cropper Bicycle' and a few of 'Bagley, the Gents' Tailor——'"

"Frisby," said I, "use them all—paste the whole collection over your dog and yourself—then walk off the cliff."

He sullenly unfolded a green poster, swabbed the boiler with paste, laid the upper section of the bill upon it and plastered the whole bill down with a thwack of his brush. As I walked away I heard him muttering.

Next day Daisy was so horrified that I promised to give Frisby an ultimatum. I found him with Freda, gazing sentimentally at his work, and I sent him back to the shop in a hurry, telling Freda at the same time that she could spend her leisure in providing Mr. Frisby with sand, soap, and a scrubbing brush. Then I walked on to my post of observation.

I watched until sunset. Daisy came with her father to hear my report, but there was nothing to tell, and we three walked slowly back to the house.

In the evenings the professor worked on his volumes, the click of his typewriter sounding faintly behind his closed door. Daisy and I played chess sometimes; sometimes we played "hearts." I don't remember that we ever finished a game of either—we talked too much.

Our discussions covered every topic of interest: we argued upon politics; we skimmed over literature and music; we settled international differences; we spoke vaguely of human brotherhood. I say we slighted no subject of interest—I am wrong; we never spoke of love.

Now, love is a matter of interest to ten people out of ten. Why it was that it did not appear to interest us is as interesting a question as love itself. We were young, alert, enthusiastic, inquiring. We eagerly absorbed theories concerning any curious phenomena in nature, as intellectual cocktails to stimulate discussion. And yet we did not discuss love. I do not say that we avoided it. No; the subject was too completely ignored for even that. And yet we found it very difficult to pass an hour separated. The professor noticed this, and laughed at us. We were not even embarrassed.

Sunday passed in pious contemplation of the ocean. Daisy read a little in her prayer-book, and the professor threw a cloth over his typewriter and strolled up and down the sands. He may have been lost in devout abstraction; he may have been looking for footprints. As for me, my mind was very serene and I was more than happy. Daisy read to me a little for my soul's sake, and the professor came up and said something cheerful. He also examined the magazine of my Winchester.

That night, too, Daisy took her guitar to the sands and sang one or two Armenian hymns. Unlike us, the Armenians do not take their pleasures sadly. One of their pleasures is evidently religion.

The big moon came up over the dunes and stared at the sea until the surface of every wave trembled with radiance. A sudden stillness fell across the world; the wind died out; the foam ran noiselessly across the beach; the cricket's rune was stilled.

I leaned back, dropping one hand upon the sand. It touched another hand, soft and cool.

After a while the other hand moved slightly, and I found that my own had closed above it. Presently one finger stirred a little—only a little—for our fingers were interlocked.

On the shore the foam-froth bubbled and winked and glimmered in the moonlight. A star fell from the zenith, showering the night with incandescent dust.

If our fingers lay interlaced beside us, her eyes were calm and serene as always, wide open, fixed upon the depths of a dark sky. And when her father rose and spoke to us, she did not withdraw her hand.

"Is it late?" she asked dreamily.

"It is midnight, little daughter."

I stood up, still holding her hand and aided her to rise. And when, at the door, I said good-night, she turned and looked at me for a little while in silence, then passed into her room slowly, with head still turned toward me.

All night long I dreamed of her, and when the east whitened, I sprang up, the thunder of the ocean in my ears, the strong sea wind blowing into the open window.

She is asleep, I thought, and I leaned from the window and peered out into the east.

The sea called to me, tossing its thousand arms; the soaring gulls, dipping, rising, wheeling above the sand-bar, screamed and clamored for a playmate. I slipped into my bathing suit, dropped from the window upon the soft sand, and in a moment had plunged head-foremost into the surf, swimming beneath the waves toward the open sea.

Under the tossing ocean the voice of the waters was in my ears—a low, sweet voice, intimate, mysterious. Through singing foam and broad green glassy depths, by whispering sandy channels atrail with sea weed, and on, on, out into the vague, cool sea, I sped, rising to the top, sinking, gliding. Then at last I flung myself out of water, hands raised, and the clamor of the gulls filled my ears.

As I lay, breathing fast, drifting on the sea, far out beyond the gulls I saw a flash of white, and an arm was lifted, signaling me.

"Daisy!" I called.

A clear hail came across the water, distinct on the sea-wind, and, at the same instant, we raised our hands and moved toward each other.

How we laughed as we met in the sea! The white dawn came up out of the depths, the zenith turned to rose and ashes.

And with the dawn came the wind—a great sea-wind, fresh, aromatic, that hurled our voices back into our throats and lifted the sheeted spray above our heads. Every wave, crowned with mist, caught us in a cool embrace, cradled us, and slipped away, only to leave us to another wave, higher, stronger, crested with opalescent glory, breathing incense.

We turned together up the coast, swimming lightly side by side, but our words were caught up by the winds and whirled into the sky.

We looked up at the driving clouds; we looked out upon the pallid waste of waters; but it was into each other's eyes we looked, wondering, wistful, questioning the reason of sky and sea. And there in each other's eyes we read the mystery, and we knew that earth and sky and sea were created for us alone.

Drifting on by distant sands and dunes, her white fingers touching mine, we spoke, keying our tones to the wind's vast harmony. And we spoke of love.

Gray and wide as the limitless span of the sky and the sea, the winds gathered from the world's ends to bear us on; but they were not familiar winds; for now, along the coast, the breakers curled and showed a million fangs, and the ocean stirred to its depths, uneasy, ominous, and the menace of its murmur drew us closer as we moved.

Where the dull thunder and the tossing spray warned us from sunken reefs, we heard the harsh challenges of gulls; where the pallid surf twisted in yellow coils of spume above the bar, the singing sands murmured of treachery and secrets of lost souls, agasp in the throes of silent undertows.

But there was a little stretch of beach, glimmering through the mountains of water, and toward this we turned, side by side. Around us the water grew warmer; the breath of the following waves moistened our cheeks; the water itself grew gray and strange about us.

"We have come too far," I said, but she only answered: "Faster, faster! I am afraid!" The water was almost hot now; its aromatic odor filled our lungs.

"The Gulf loop!" I muttered. "Daisy, shall I help you?"

"No. Swim—close by me! Oh-h! Dick——"

Her startled cry was echoed by another—a shrill scream, unutterably horrible—and a great bird flapped from the beach, splashing and beating its pinions across the water with a thundering noise.

Out across the waves it blundered, rising little by little from the water, and now, to my horror, I saw another monstrous bird swinging in the air above it, squeal-



Drawn by
B. West Clinedinst.

"I WATCHED IT OVER MY SHOULDER."

ing as it turned on its vast wings. Before I could speak we touched the beach, and I half lifted her to the shore.

"Quick!" I repeated. "We must not wait."

Her eyes were dark with fear, but she rested a hand on my shoulder, and we crept up among the dune grasses and sank down by the point of sand where the rough shelter stood, surrounded by the iron-ringed piles.

She lay there, breathing fast and deep, dripping with spray. I had no power of speech left, but when I rose wearily to my knees and looked out upon the water, my blood ran cold. Above the ocean, on the breast of the roaring wind, three enormous birds sailed, turning and wheeling among each other; and below, drifting with the gray stream of the Gulf loop, a colossal bulk lay half submerged—a gigantic lizard, floating belly upward.

Then Daisy crept kneeling to my side and touched me, trembling from head to foot.

"I know," I muttered; "I must run back for the rifle."

"And—and leave me?"

I took her by the hand and we dragged ourselves through the wire-grass to the open end of a boiler lying in the sand.

She crept in on her hands and knees and called to me to follow.

"You are safe now," I cried; "I must go back for the rifle."

"The birds may—may attack you."

"If they do I can get into one of the other boilers," I said.

"Daisy, you must not venture out until I come back. You won't, will you?"

"No-o," she whispered doubtfully.

"Then—good-by."

"Good-by," she answered, but her voice was very small and still.

"Good-by," I said again. I was kneeling at the mouth of the big iron tunnel; it was dark inside and I could not see her, but, before I was conscious of it, her arms were around my neck and we had kissed each other.

I don't remember how I went away. When I came to my proper senses I was swimming along the coast at full speed, and over my head wheeled one of the birds, screaming at every turn.

The intoxication of that innocent embrace; the close impress of her arms around my neck gave me a strength and recklessness that neither fear nor fatigue could subdue. The bird above me did not even frighten me, but I watched it over my shoulder, swimming strongly, with the tide now aiding me, now stemming my course, but I saw the shore passing quickly and my strength increased, and I shouted when I came in sight of the house, and scrambled up on the sand, dripping and excited. There was nobody in sight, and I gave a last glance up into the air where the bird wheeled, still screaming, and hastened into the house. Freda stared at me in amazement as I

seized the rifle and shouted for the professor.

"He has just gone to town with Captain McPeck in his wagon," stammered Freda.

"What!" I cried. "Does he know where his daughter is?"

"Miss Holyrod is asleep—not?" gasped Freda.

"Where's Frisby?" I cried impatiently.

"Yimmie?" quavered Freda.

"Yes, Jimmie; isn't there anybody here? Good heavens! where's that man in the shop?"

"He, also, iss gone," said Freda, shedding tears, "to buy papier-maché; Yimmie, he iss gone to post bills."

I waited to hear no more, but swung my rifle over my shoulder and, hanging the cartridge belt across my chest, hurried out and up the beach. The bird was not in sight.

I had been running for perhaps a minute when, far up on the dunes, I saw a yellow dog rush madly through a clump of sweet-bay, and at the same moment a bird soared past, rose, and hung hovering just above the thicket. Suddenly the bird swooped; there was a shriek and a yelp from the cur, but the bird gripped it in one claw and beat its wings upon the sand, striving to rise. Then I saw Frisby—paste, bucket and brush raised—fall upon the bird, yelling lustily. The fierce creature relaxed its talons and the dog rushed on, squeaking with terror. The bird turned on Frisby and sent him sprawling on his face, a sticky mass of paste and sand. But this did not end the struggle. The bird, croaking wildly, flew at the prostrate bill-poster, and the sand whirled into a pillar above its terrible wings. Scarcely knowing what I was about, I raised my rifle and fired twice. A horrid scream echoed each shot, and the bird rose heavily in a shower of sand. But two bullets were imbedded in that mass of foul feathers, and I saw the wires and scarlet tape uncoiling on the sand at my feet. In an instant I seized them and passed the ends around a cedar tree, hooking the clasps tight. Then I cast one swift glance upward where the bird wheeled screeching, anchored like a kite to the pallium wires, and I hurried on across the dunes, the shells cutting my feet and the bushes tearing my wet swim-

ming suit until I dripped with blood from shoulder to ankle. Out in the ocean the carcass of the Thermosaurus floated, claws outspread, belly glistening in the gray light, and over him circled two birds. As I reached the shelter, I knelt and fired into the mass of scales, and at my first shot a horrible thing occurred: the lizard-like head writhed, the slitted yellow eyes sliding open from the film that covered them. A shudder passed across the undulating body, the great scaled belly heaved, and one leg feebly clawed at the air.

The thing was still alive!

Crushing back the horror that almost paralyzed my hands, I planted shot after shot into the quivering reptile, while it writhed and clawed, striving to turn over and dive; and at each shot the black blood spurted in long, slim jets across the water. And now Daisy was at my side, pale and determined, swiftly clasp- ing each tape-marked wire to the iron rings in the circle around us. Twice I filled the magazine from my belt, and twice I poured streams of steel-tipped bullets into the scaled mass, twisting and shuddering on the sea. Suddenly the birds steered toward us—I felt the wind from their vast wings—I saw the feathers erect, vibrating—I saw the spread claws out-stretched, and I struck furiously at them, crying to Daisy to run into the iron shelter. Back- ing, swinging my clubbed rifle, I re- treated, but I tripped across one of the taut pallium wires, and in an instant the hideous birds were on me, and the bone in my fore-arm snapped like a pipe-stem at a blow from their wings. Twice I struggled to my knees, blinded with blood, confused, almost fainting; then I fell again, rolling into the mouth of the iron boiler.

* * * * *

When I struggled back to conscious- ness, Daisy knelt silently beside me, while Captain McPeck and Professor Hol- royd bound up my shattered arm, talking excitedly. The pain made me faint and dizzy; I tried to speak and could not. At last they got me to my feet and into the wagon, and Daisy came, too, and crouched beside me, wrapped in oilskins to her eyes. Fatigue, lack of food and excite- ment had combined with wounds and



"I RAISED MY RIFLE AND FIRED TWICE."

broken bones to extinguish the last atom of strength in my body, but my mind was clear enough to understand that the trouble was over and the Thermosaurus safe.

I heard McPeck say that one of the birds that I had anchored to a cedar tree had torn loose from the bullets and winged its way heavily out to sea. The professor answered: "Yes, the Ekaf-bird; the others were Ool-Ylliks. I'd have given my right arm to have secured them." Then for a time I heard no more; but the jolting of the wagon over the dunes roused me to keenest pain, and I held out my right hand to Daisy. She clasped it in both of hers, and kissed it again and again.

* * * * *

There is little more to add, I think. Professor Bruce Stoddard has edited this story carefully. His own scientific pamphlet will be published soon, to be followed by Professor Holroyd's sixteen

volumes. In a few days the stuffed and mounted Thermosaurus will be placed on free public exhibition in the arena of Madison Square Garden, the only building in the city large enough to contain the body of this immense winged reptile.

When my arm came out of splints, Daisy and I—but really that has nothing to do with a detailed scientific description of the Thermosaurus, which, I think, I shall add as an appendix to the book. If you do not find it there it will be because Daisy and I have very little time to write about Thermosaurians.

But what I really want to tell you about is the extraordinary adventures of Captain McPeck and Frisby—how they produced a specimen of *Samia Cynthia* that dwarfed a hundred of *Attacus Atlas*, and how the American line steamer "St. Louis" fouled the thing with her screw.

The more I think of it, the more determined I am to tell it to you. It will be difficult to prevent me. And that is not fiction either.

[THE END.]

ALONE—TOGETHER.

BY CLEMENT M. HAMMOND.

For one wild downward rush—
Unheld, unhindered;

For one short moment to be just an atom swept along by
Nature's hand—

Effortless, powerless;

For this, again with many weary footsteps, up the long hill
I slowly drag the sled—

Alone.

II.

But climbing with me, at my side close clinging—
Trusting, trembling;

Here is my conquest, to me more than all God's gifts besides—
Lighting, strengthening;

And all because of her sweet company, the hill becomes a
level, smooth-made road, and climbing is the greater
pleasure of the two—

Together.

THE COUNCIL OF THE STARS.

BY LIVINGSTON B. MORSE.

FROM the East, where in the vastness of space Orion stands like a barbaric prince decked with his jewels, spake Rigel, the star, to her husband, Betelgeus :

"Look down upon the children of Earth, O my husband ! Behold how they strive, one with another, so that the whole world is torn with their jarrings and the noise of their strife. Mark how they boast of their puny strength, these creatures of a day, formed from the dust and the air, and how, with their little minds, they seek to explain the workings of the universe, known only to God and to His sublime servants, the angels. And note, moreover, how they, who are themselves so weak and ignorant and sinful, are yet so intolerant of the weakness and ignorance of their brethren that the world is filled with their persecution and their cruelty. Note all this well, O my husband ! and tell me is it right, is it seemly, that these things should be ?"

Then, from where he sat high on the shoulder of Orion, answered Betelgeus, the martial, whose grave and lofty countenance was bathed in the ruddy orange glow of his beard : "What thou sayest is true. I have, indeed, witnessed the strivings of the children of Earth, and they are displeasing in my sight. But wherefore should they trouble thee, O Rigel, my wife ! high as thou art above them in the realms where dwelleth peace ?"

"It is because that the everlasting peace which compasseth us about, the solemn mantle of eternal silence, is rent with the discord of these, the one in-harmony in the great hymn of nature. And if to thee and me this seems a cause of grave offense, how much more must it offend that higher Power, before whose throne we are but grains of sand ?"

Betelgeus answered her : "Truly thou sayest ; yet, what then wouldst thou do, O Rigel, my wife ?"

"I would that a council of the stars be called ; that the case be laid before them, and that, after due thought, they may have power to deal with the children of our

sister Earth as may seem best to them, that happily a way may thus be found to bring them into harmony with God and nature."

And Betelgeus, nodding, answered : "It is well."

So straightway through the heavens, from sphere to sphere, from system to system, from infinite to infinite, even to the furthestmost limits of the paths where planets and suns revolve, clarion-clear rang out the message : "Come !" And one by one the stars responded to the call.

When they were assembled, out before them all, at the foot of the giant, Orion, stepped Rigel, the shining, the maiden wife of Betelgeus.

Pure and pale she stood, proud in her regnant youth, her fair face alight with high resolve, and her blue eyes like twin lakes, the dwellings of eternal peace, so fathomless they were and still. In her right hand she bore a flashing sword, and its steel-blue light waved backward from her, bathing her flowing hair, and quivered as an aureole about her. She spoke, and her voice, like a full-toned organ, swelled up to the vault above and trembled through the vast arches of the infinite :

"Brethren and sisters, we are gathered here to take such action as may seem to us most just and righteous in regard to those, the offspring of our fallen sister Earth. Ye have oft noted how in their folly and their ignorance they cease to follow those great plans of life laid down in broad, straight lines, whereby each star, each sun, each man, each flower, each drop of dew and ray of light must live out his allotted time, performing his allotted task, not to his own aggrandizement, but as a part of the stupendous, all-embracing plan which is the glory of the ruling Power, and wherein all things work in perfect harmony and unity. Now, therefore, inasmuch as these, the sinful children of the Earth, have erred, and still do err, in breaking through those laws of harmony and accord, how doth it seem to you that we should deal with them ?"

First answered Sirius: "I have long observed with shame and anger the follies and the sins of these ephemera. Aeons ago, before she fell and lost her title in the heritage of stars, Earth was my favorite sister; and when she wed the Sun and children came to her, I watched their destinies, and what I could I did for them through love of her. They called me once their Nile star, and gave me thanks for the productive ebb and flow of their great river. That was in their youth; but as they grew their pride grew with them, till, as now, they prated in their arrogance of their own deeds, disowned all higher powers, and through their vanity became unto themselves both gods and idols. I wearied of them long ago, and of their boastings. Do with them as it seemeth fit to you. I have no word of grace or intercession."

Next rose white Spica, hanging like a pearl of ripened barley in the Virgin's hand: "I, too, have loved our sister Earth, and for my love I sought an interest in her children. In the Golden Age men called me Justice; I dwelt among them an honored guest and friend; my voice rose in their councils, and to me was left to make decision when they disagreed. But with the Silver Age they sought me less and less; and though they turned to me a smiling face, their ears were deaf unto my counseling. And when the Bronze Age came, their hearts, grown hard with arrogance, disowned me quite; and as upon a friend grown poor and old, they turned their backs and knew my face no more.

Then fiercely spake Aldebaran, flaming ruby-bed, a fire-flash in the angry eye of Taurus: "Why do we dally with these worms, which set at naught the laws that rule the universe, and dare to match their puny minds with problems further from their reach than God from ours? Why do we hesitate? Shall we not rather punish their impiety? Our sister, freed from her too sinful brood, will take her place once more with us, forgiven and purified. For her sake, then, and ours, let them be destroyed. Let us send Algol, the baleful, the demon of the blazing sword, to cut them off utterly. I am for destruction. Let them be destroyed!"

And one by one the solemn voices of the stars took up his cry:

"Yes, let them be destroyed!"

From gentle Vega, in her lyre tones; from bright Capella, with her diamond light; from brilliant Menkar, and from Alpheratz—through all the mighty hosts of heaven rang the cry, "Destroy! Destroy! Destroy!"

Then she who had till now kept silent, resting like an arc of silver set in blowing clouds, pale Dian, Earth's twin-sister, spoke:

"Hear me, I pray you, first before this fiat goeth forth irrevocably. Through countless years have I accompanied my sister Earth in all her wanderings to and fro. None can know so well as I what she has suffered through her children; and lo! the sight of all her suffering has drained my very soul of tears—that I can weep no more. All that you have said is true. Weak her children are and sinful; unworthy of a place in God's great universe. Yet such is that strange thing called mother-love that our poor sister clings to them, holding them even dearer than her life or the star-crown which you offer her. I pray you, then, let first some messenger be sent who may acquaint her with your purpose, lest that by striking them thus suddenly you strike a deadlier blow at her."

After Dian's plea a thoughtful silence fell upon the vast assembly.

"Who shall be sent upon this errand?" questioned one at length.

And Dian answered, "Let Rigel go; her young beauty and her soul, untouched by sin, will best succeed."

So forth from the high arc of heaven went Rigel downward through the limitless expanse; down like a falling star, with her passionless blue eyes and blowing hair, and the flashing of the steel sword in her hand waving a cold, pale light about her. Downward she swept through space with a mighty rushing sound, like the sweeping of God's mantle, downward to where the Earth, bent with her years and toil, crawled in her ceaseless journey round the Sun.

And when she was come near she rested, hovering on outstretched wings; and Earth, lifting up her sorrowful eyes, gazed at her.

"I greet thee, sister," said the star. "I also bring thee greeting from the hosts on high; greeting and compassion."

" Their greeting I am pleased with, Rigel, sister ; but wherefore do they send their sympathy ? "

" Because that thou art fallen from the shining ones, having chosen for thyself a lot of toil. "

Earth slowly shook her head, and a smile crept to the drooping corners of her mouth. " Therein thou knowest not of what thou speakest, Rigel, sister. Fallen I may be from yon shining ones and toil may be my lot, yet have I not my children ? I need not sympathy—nay, I am far more blessed than they who send it me. "

" It is of thy children I am come to speak, " said Rigel, solemnly. " Their conduct is displeasing in our eyes ; their ways are dark and they are wholly sinful. It, therefore, is our will that thou shouldst give them up to us for chastisement. "

Then to Earth's eyes there came a look of fear. She threw a sheltering wing about her brood and folding them against her heart—

" And if I give them up to thee ? " she asked.

" We will destroy them utterly ; and thou, freed from the weight of their down-dragging sin, may take once more thy rightful place with us. "

" Give up my children, my poor little ones ! " the Earth replied. " Alas, then what remains for me if they are taken from me ? "

" We offer thee thy star-crown back again and full forgiveness shouldst thou cast them off. "

" What is a star-crown ; what is life to

me without my children, weak and sinful though they be ? If chastening must be done, then let it fall on me ; but spare them, spare my little ones, for, if I have not them to love, there is no life. "

" But it is they who drag thee down, " the star said, wonderingly. " It is they who, by their sin, have caused thy suffering and thy fall ; how, then, canst thou love them ? "

Earth smiled a sweet, sad smile. She raised her toil-worn hands in supplication while the big, slow tears ran down her furrowed cheeks.

" That is *why* I love them, sister ; it is that I must forgive them. Ah ! what can you know, bright star that you are—what can you know of that sweet pain that makes the tender joy of motherhood ? To suffer, to forgive, and still to forgive again—that is the perfect love, the mother-love ; that is my love for my children. O Rigel, sister ! intercede for me. Spare, I pray, my little ones, my helpless children, that depend on me. Take back thy offered star-crown if thou wilt, but leave to me my crown of sorrows and my children ! "

And Rigel, in silence, bowed her stately head, abashed before the majesty of motherhood. If, indeed, such love, such pity, such divine self-sacrifice were possible from Earth to her weak offspring, what then must be the still diviner tenderness of that great Power to whom the myriads of stars are children ?

And marveling greatly at this new wonder of God's universe the star-maid spread her wings and mounted upward.





Drawn by A. C. Redmond.

THE GREAT ELECTRIC TRUST.

BY FRANCIS LYNDE.

IT was a sultry day, even on the high uplands of eastern Colorado; and my train was a slow one. There were not more than a dozen passengers in the sleeper, and none was companionable. What was still worse, my cigar case was empty; and at my age the flavor of one's tobacco is no longer a matter of indifference.

But one cannot sit and glower out of a car-window hours on end with nothing to break the monotony, so I bought a third bad cigar of the buffet-man and went forward to smoke it. The smoking-room was empty; and when the bad cigar proved a dismal impossibility, I settled myself in a corner and went to sleep.

When I awoke I was no longer alone. In the seat diagonally opposite were two young men; the two who had got ahead of me the night before at the Pullman office and secured the only vacant stateroom on the train.

One of them was a clean-cut, cool-eyed athlete, with broad shoulders, and beard enough to mask his face. The other was a handsome young dog of the sort that is always straining at the leash; a fellow of the eager type, with a hint of genius in his eyes, and a face that seemed vaguely familiar, though I couldn't place it.

They were talking when I awoke; and seeing who they were, I was resentful enough about the stateroom episode to close my eyes and listen.

"No, I can believe you didn't have a picnic, Brantford"—it was the genius who said this. "It's no joke to go out and float a million-dollar scheme on an invention. Capital is mighty shy of inventions, nowadays, especially in the electric line. But my end of the pole hasn't been any too easy to carry, either. I've had my hands full to keep the thing dark."

"I don't doubt it," said the other. "Of course, you couldn't keep the building of the plant a secret."

"No; but that scheme of buying the old Algonquin placer was a happy thought. If it hadn't been for that, we should have had the world about our ears long ago."

If I had had any compunctions about listening, they would not have survived this mention of the Algonquin. This was an exhausted placer mine in El Remo Cañon. It had belonged to me, and had been sold for a song to an Eastern syndicate. The purchasers had given out that they were about to try a reworking of the tailings by a new electric process.

"Give me credit for that idea," said the bearded one. "You thought it wouldn't make any difference, but I saw at once that we'd have to have some decently plausible reason for carting a whole power plant into the mountains."

"You were right; and even with that excuse I've had the devil's own time of it keeping the busybodies off. There have been at least a dozen fellows up from Denver trying to worm out the secret of the 'new process.' By Jove! if they knew what the 'new process' really is, and how little it has to do with reworking worn-out mines, wouldn't there be the mischief to pay and no pitch hot?"

"Rather. But you're all in shape up there now, aren't you?"

"The last of the neutralizers was set up and tested Friday. I'm all ready to pull the string when you say the word."

"Good. That will be to-morrow at noon. The circular is out; but of course nobody will pay any attention to that. We'll have to give them an object-lesson."

The younger man laughed. "I'd give half of my share to be on the ground," he said. "It'll be unique in its way."

"Yes, but you can't be. You'll have to keep your hand on the throttle and your eye on the signal-staff. It'll be pretty nearly a full-fledged calamity while it lasts. By the way, has the signal been tested? We don't want to fall down on that. Our telephone will go to sleep with the rest of them when you start the machinery, won't it?"

"Sure. But the telescope scheme works all right. You have your copy of the code."

Silence ensued for the space of a dozen clicking rail-lengths. It was broken by the man Brantford.

"Say, Phil, when we started in on this thing you promised to tell me why you insisted on beginning with Denver instead of one of the larger cities of the East. I thought it was a waste of time, and I think so yet. It's no experiment; we know what we can do, and we could have cleaned up New York or Chicago just as well, and at less expense."

"I know; but I had my reasons," replied the genius.

"Of course you had; but what are they?"

"I'd about made up my mind to keep that a secret, but I don't know as I mind telling you now. Do you suppose the old party in the corner is sound asleep?" This, I presume, with a nod in my direction.

"Asleep or drunk. Go on with your story."

Now, a little abuse, judiciously applied, goes a long way toward justifying what may be termed the wisdom of the serpent. But if anything further of justification had been needed in my case, the next sentence gave it, good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over.

"It began a year ago," continued the young scoundrel. "I was the electrician for the Denver Arc-light and Transit Company. Old Angus Percival is the president, and his daughter was the belle of her set."

"Is yet," cut in the other.

"Yes. Well, I had the audacity to fall in love with Miss Percival, and she—but you don't care about the details. It was as good as settled between us, and I went to the old man. You've perhaps heard of the Honorable Angus; if you have, you can imagine what kind of a reception I got. He didn't quite kick me out of the private office, but that is what it amounted to."

The bearded one laughed; not very sympathetically, I was glad to remark.

"I don't doubt you gave him as good as he sent."

"I'm afraid I did. He said I was a fortune-hunter; and I told him he'd live to see the day when I could buy and sell him. He laughed in my face at that—

told me to come back when I could draw a check for seven figures and he'd make out the bill of sale."

"Did you have this scheme in mind then?"

"I've had it in mind ever since I began to dabble in electricity; but after that, I went home to New York and sat up nights with it till I'd figured it out to a practical certainty. Now you know why I chose Denver for the trial trip. I wanted to do the old man up among the first of the victims."

"By Jove! but that's poetic retribu-

I don't know why the young jack-anapes didn't recognize me. Perhaps it was the beard; till within a few months I had always gone clean-shaven; but no matter about that. I had a knottier problem to solve. This mysterious plant in El Remo Cañon with the diabolical conspiracy behind it: what did it mean? Had young Cartwright actually hit upon some method of cornering electricity, as one would corner wheat or pork?

Let me say here that I had always believed the thing would be done; I had never doubted the possibility—he is a



Drawn by A. C. Goodland.

"SHE DREW HERSELF UP WITH HER CHEEKS AFLAME."

tion with a vengeance! Old Percival has made his money in electricity, and you're going to corner his stock in trade—and with a plant built on ground that he used to own. A novelist would make something out of that. Finished your cigar? Then let's go back to the stateroom; it's hideously close in here."

When they had gone I sat bolt upright and made sure I was really awake. That fact established beyond question, my emotions were such as to be difficultly described. For I—the "old party in the corner" who was neither asleep nor drunk—I am "old Percival" himself, and no other!

bold man who talks of impossibilities in this inventive age.

And if the secret needed only a discoverer, why not Cartwright as well as another? He was a genius in his way; I never disputed that; but I didn't want him for a son-in-law. Surely a man may be permitted to have his preferences when it comes to a question of relationship.

But to the facts. Here was a roc's egg which, if permitted to hatch, would bring instantaneous ruin not only upon me and the company I represented, but upon thousands of others. The prospect was appalling. A modern city deprived of

electricity! A city, did I say?—a state, a nation, a world!

Consider it for a moment: no telephones, no telegraph, no electric transit, no light, no newspapers with news in them. Railway trains running blindly; traffic suspended; business paralyzed at a blow. All these calamities hanging like the sword of Damocles over a helpless world—a world at the mercy of a single gigantic trust. Clearly, this conspiracy—this father of all trusts—must be strangled in its infancy. But how?

I revolved a hundred expedients in my mind during the remainder of that eventful journey, but none of them promised certain success. I even went the length of considering the advisability of having Cartwright arrested on our arrival at Denver. But I had no evidence of anything illegal. He would go scot-free at his examination, and would doubtless prosecute me for false imprisonment.

That would never do. What next? Possibly a personal appeal to this brace of gallows-birds—but no; I could not bring myself to make it. If Cartwright had come to me in the proper spirit I might have taken him up and helped him. But he had declared war, and I had fought my way through too many minatory years to go down without a struggle.

That conclusion brought me face to face with the one expedient which did promise success, or at least an indefinite postponement of the catastrophe. I knew the location of the plant. It was to be driven by water-power, I had been told. A trusty and speedy emissary, who would ride as for his life and sink a dynamite cartridge torpedo-wise on the upper side of the dam—it could be done if I could find this messenger.

A desperate expedient, you say? With something of criminal hardihood about it? Pooh, my friend! That is nothing as between rival corporations. Do not railway companies block each other's right of way, tear up tracks, level embankments, or what not, to carry their points? Of course, it is different when private individuals do such things; but it is one of the recognized rights of corporations to make war, and this was corporation against corporation; the Denver Arc-light and Transit Company

against this thrice-accursed syndicate of Cartwright's.

I had settled the details before we reached Denver, and had taken the additional precaution of wiring ahead for a detective to meet me at the Union Depot. Whatever befell, it would not be amiss to keep track of the man Brantford. I had gathered from their talk that Cartwright would go on at once to the plant on the El Remo, and that Brantford would remain in the city. In which case it might be necessary to use him as a means of communication with his accomplice.

The detective met me as ordered, and I pointed out the man I wanted him to shadow. Then I went to my office and found that I had had my trouble for my pains. The first thing I came upon in the mass of waiting mail was the circular Brantford had spoken of. It was brief and business-like.

"OFFICE OF THE ELECTRIC CONSERVATION COMPANY.

"Room 714, Rathburne Building,

"DENVER, COLO., June 19th.

"NOTICE TO ALL USERS OF ELECTRICITY:

"You are hereby notified that the royalty for the use of electricity by your company is due and unpaid. If same is not liquidated before noon of June 29th, the supply will be discontinued.

"Checks (certified), or drafts, should be made payable to the Electric Conservation Company, and may be mailed or delivered to the undersigned. Statement of amount due is attached hereto.

"Very respectfully,

"CHARLES BRANTFORD,

"Secretary."

I read it through, noted the address, and glanced at the bill. Admitting the possibility of enforcing collection, it was quite modest, all things considered.

"THE DENVER ARC-LIGHT AND

"TRANSIT CO.,

"To The Electric Conservation Co. *Dr.*

"For the use of Electricity for one year, from June 19th, . . . \$10,000."

Unsupported by my inside information, the apparent insanity of the demand and the threat would have provoked a smile. But it was no jest. These villains knew

very well what they were about. It was anything but insanity, as all Denver would find out if my plan should miscarry.

Late as it was, I made an effort to find and dispatch my messenger before going home. "Mexican George," a post-graduate vaquero, and now one of our motoneers, was the man; a desperate fellow who had successfully defended his car against a recent raid of footpads in one of the suburbs.

But he was not on duty, and no one knew where to find him. On reconsideration, I concluded that there was time enough. To-morrow, at noon, Brantford had said. The plant on El Remo was but twenty-five miles distant, as a cowboy would ride, and George would have time enough and to spare if he started early in the morning. So thinking, I left word with the night-foreman to have George on hand with a good horse early in the morning, and went home, in such a frame of mind as may be imagined. Unluckily for both of us, my daughter Kate was awaiting me in the library, evidently with something to say of a nature unsayable.

"I'm so glad you've come, poppa," she began, with the intonation which I have learned to recognize as the precursor of some fresh invasion of my rights. "I was afraid you had been delayed another day."

"Oh, you were," said I. I was in no mood to be willingly beset by my womankind.

"Yes; I had a letter to-day, and I wanted to see you—to ask——"

"Well, well; out with it. I'm tired and worried, and don't want to be badgered."

"It's this, poppa"—she came and perched herself on the arm of my chair, as her mother was used to do in the days that are gone. "I had a letter to-day from—from Philip——"

"Philip who?" I interrupted, knowing well enough what was coming.

"Philip Cartwright. He is coming to Denver before long; he has been doing

well, and—and you know you said it was because he had no money that you sent him away. He writes to ask if he mayn't come to see me——"

It was too much. A man at my time of life ought to be able to control himself, but there is a limit to all things. Without a thought of possible consequences, I sprang up and poured out the vials of my wrath.

"Curse his impudence!" I shouted. "If he comes here I'll pitch him out of the window! Do you hear? Doing well, is he? Do you know how? No, of course you don't. Well, I'll tell you. He and some of his scoundrelly associates have built an infernal machine up on the old Algonquin claim. They're going to blackmail us; ruin us, world without end! Listen to this——" I was quite insane by that time—wholly lost to all sense of prudence; and I jerked the circular from my pocket and read it to her.

She listened with wide eyes.

"But, poppa? How can they——" she began.

"Never mind how. I don't know, myself. They'll do it—or they think they will; but, by heaven, they sha'n't! I'll block their game if I go to jail for it! And that thrice-accursed young villain



Drawn by A. E. Redwood.

"THE BRONCHO SPRANG AWAY AT THE WORD."

that you want to throw yourself away on had better stand from under if he wants to stay on top of earth. I'll bury him so deep that it'll take a steam-shovel to dig him out!"

Of all the foolish things said and repented of in a not altogether blameless life, I think this was the most ill-advised. But what would you, when one has been sweating wrath from every pore for the better part of an afternoon?

Kate has her share of the Percival temper; and when she drew herself up with her cheeks aflame and eyes flashing I knew what to expect.

"You mean to kill him?" she said, steadily. "I believe you are quite capable of it—if you could make money by doing it. But I give you fair warning. I love him, and some day we shall be married, with or without your consent. I don't know anything about this enterprise of his, nor do I care. But I will say this: you are not going to hurt him if I can do anything to prevent it."

With that she swept out of the room and left me to my own reflections. They were neither pleasant nor profitable; but through all the reek and spume of after-
wrath I clung obstinately to my plan. Mexican George should be sent on his errand, come what might.

The thing was done, accordingly, and in good time. When I reached the office early the following morning, my henchman was standing on the curb with his arm around the neck of a wiry broncho. He was a man of few words, and he merely nodded when I gave him his instructions.

"Better use dynamite and a quick fuse, if you are not afraid of it," I said. "And see here; this is a strictly business deal. There mustn't be anybody hurt. Be swift and silent. Get that dam blown out before twelve o'clock, and you'll find five hundred dollars, in gold, waiting for you when you get back."

I did not like the look of him when he turned with one foot in the stirrup and glanced back at me.

"Yo comprende," he said, "you want a me not-a to keel somebody. But-a the dam—she mus' come down enaway. Vaya!"

The broncho sprang away at the word, and I looked at my watch. George had

something over four hours in which to cover the distance and do his work. It was time enough, barring accidents; and I went to my desk with the doubtful assurance that the catastrophe promised for noon was at least likely to be postponed.

Promptly on the stroke of eleven I presented myself at the door of Room 714, Rathburne Building. Brantford sat at his desk alone. He looked up with a quick glance of half-recognition, but it was evident that he did not remember where he had seen me.

"Good morning. This is Mr. Charles Brantford?"

He bowed.

"My name is Percival. I presume you are the sender of this"—handing him the circular and its inclosure.

"I am."

I looked him over critically.

"You don't look like a crank or a madman, Mr. Brantford. Tell me candidly, now, do you expect anybody to put up money on such a bluff as that?"

"Certainly not," he replied, coolly. "On the contrary, I supposed it would be ignored, as it has been. You are the only person concerned who has done me the honor to notice it."

"Do you know you are liable to prosecution as a blackmailer?" I demanded.

"Pardon me," he rejoined blandly. "I should be if I were an impostor. But I am not. I represent a corporation duly organized and chartered under the laws of the State of New York; and the conditions set forth in this circular will be carried out to the letter in a little less than an hour."

"I'd like to wager you an even thousand that they won't be," said I, confidently.

"This is not a pool-room, Mr. Percival, and I am not here to bet with our future customers. Your royalty is ten thousand dollars—a very reasonable sum, you will concede, in view of what we might ask. Pay it before twelve o'clock, and your plant will be stopped for only a few minutes—just long enough to give others the needed object-lesson."

"Humph! Thank you for nothing. I need the object-lesson quite as much as the others. If you can work your miracle, we'll talk about royalties after-



Drawn by A. C. Redout.

"HE LOOKED UP WITH A QUICK GLANCE OF HALF-RECOGNITION."

ward. If you can't, you'd better make sure of your line of retreat."

"Threats are cheap, Mr. Percival. What do you mean?"

"This. That you want to carry out your programme at twelve o'clock sharp. If you fail, I shall swear out a warrant for your arrest on a charge of attempted blackmail."

With that I left him and went back to my office. There was no lack of work—my correspondence was a week behind—but after trying in vain to dictate a few of the easier letters, I dismissed the stenographer and sat back in my chair to watch the clock.

It was a slow job. I've worried through a good few critical intervals, first and last, but never anything to compare with that leaden-winged half-hour. As the laggard minute-hand crept up to the twelve, the cold sweat broke out on my forehead and I began to weaken.

What if Mexican George had made a botch of it and got a bullet-hole in his hide before he could fire his torpedo? What if any one of a hundred possible accidents had delayed him on the road? What if?—but patience; a minute more and I should know.

The final seconds clicked themselves off with measured precision, and the clock struck the hour. I held my breath and listened. The skirr of the trolleys in the street came and went without interruption; and the carbon filament in the incandescent globe over my desk still glowed with undiminished brilliancy. One minute, two minutes, three, five, I waited, with nerves tense-strung; and still the clangor of the passing cars floated in through the open window, and the light glowed steadily.

With a sigh of relief I rose to put on my hat and go out to luncheon. Mexican George had not failed, and the crisis was postponed.

As I was closing my desk the stenographer came in and handed me a note.

"It's from Miss Kate," he explained. "She rode down early this morning and left it, with orders to give it to you when you went to lunch."

I opened the envelope with a swift premonition of evil, and glanced hastily at the inclosure.

"DEAR PAPA:

"By the time you read this, I shall be at the Algonquin. I know you have sent

Mexican George out there—never mind how I found out—and *I know what he has in his saddle-bags!* I shall outride him, if I can, and warn Philip. Whether I ever come back or not will depend upon you.

KATE."

My first impulse was to turn and rend the stenographer for not giving me the note at once. But in the very act the hideous possibility came and grappled with me, leaving me palsied and tongue-tied. I remembered that the dam in El Remo was approached by a road running up the cañon from the railway station in the main cañon. It was a mere cart-track, following the windings of the stream. If Kate had been in it when the dam went out, her fate was certain. The released water had doubtless flooded the narrow gulch, sweeping everything before it.

The thought drove me mad with anguish for a moment, and it was a curious thing that saved my sanity—no other, in fact, than the coming of the catastrophe I had been striving to avert.

One of our cars had stopped opposite the office windows, and I saw the motorer try once and again to put the current on. I could have shouted for joy when I saw that his efforts were unavailing. It meant that Cartwright's infernal machine was still in working order; that the dam was still standing; that there was one more chance of life for my poor girl.

I thank God I don't lose my head in a crisis. As quick as thought I made a dash for the telephone, found Brantford's number and tried to ring him up. But it was not until I had shouted angrily more than once into the deaf transmitter that I realized that the telephone service, too, was involved in the catastrophe. Dropping the dumb ear-piece with a malediction on my own stupidity, I ran out and sprang into the first passing cab.

"To the Rathburne Building, quick!" I shouted; and the man hurried me thither at a gallop.

All along the streets the electric cars were stopped, and the passengers were leaving them to go to the cable lines. In a rookery in Alameda Street I saw a fire breaking out; and as we turned the corner, a policeman was making frantic and fruitless efforts to turn in an alarm.

The direful calamity was as yet but just beginning to make itself apparent; but the news of it had already leaped from lip to lip, and there was awe and terror in the faces of those who gathered in knots on the sidewalks to swell the tide of panic-breeding rumor.

These were mere incidentals, swift impressions caught in mid-flitting, but they gave me an appalling glimpse of the magnitude of the visitation. But in my own anguish I scarcely thought of the consequences to others. If those motionless cars had suddenly started again, I should have gone mad with despair.

Brantford was still at his desk when I burst in upon him.

"Tell me," I gasped, "can you communicate with Cartwright?"

He seemed surprised that I should know the name of his confederate, but his answer was brief and to the point.

"I can."

"Then send him a message, quick! Tell him to watch the dam for his life—to shoot the first man he sees tampering with it. Don't lose a second, for God's sake! It's life and death, I tell you!"

He sprang to his feet and leveled a telescope through the open window. I did not wait to see how it was to be done; I knew it was but a makeshift. Five minutes later I was in the train-dispatcher's office at the Union Depot, begging like a mendicant for a special engine to take me to El Remo.

"We can't do it, Mr. Percival—not even for you," replied the dispatcher; and I saw that he, too, was haggard and anxious. "There's a big storm coming, or something; I've a dozen trains between stations, and not a wire to reach one of them with. Look at that clock!"

He pointed up to the electric clock on the wall. It had stopped at precisely six minutes past the noon hour.

"Wires down?" said I, though I knew better. "That's bad, but I can't help it; it's a case of life and death with me. For heaven's sake, let me have an engine, quick! I'll take all the chances, and pay all damages."

"I don't believe I could find an engineer who would risk it," said the dispatcher.

"For God's sake, try!" I begged. "I'll go with you."

He put on his hat and ran downstairs

with me. Luckily, there was a narrow-gauge switching engine standing in the passenger yard. A minute later the case had been stated to the engineer. He was a man of nerve, and his name is now in a codicil to my will.

"I'll try it," he said, when I had made my bid. "I reckon I'm game for it if the old gentleman is."

While we were rattling out through the yard I increased my bribe.

"It's a forty-five-minute run, isn't it?" I asked.

The engineer nodded.

"Then it's a hundred dollars to you if you make it in forty minutes, with five dollars more for every minute you cut under that!"

He nodded again, and we shot away from the city on the race for life.

I can't dwell, even now, on the nerve-racking misery of that trip. It was hoping against hope to expect that I might still be in time; and the barb of the arrow—the thought that my own hands had set the snare for my poor Kate—rankled deeper with every bound of the straining locomotive.

It seemed hours to me before we reached the main cañon; and other hours while we were storming up it to the little station at the mouth of El Remo. In reality, it was a little less than thirty minutes, all told, I believe; at least, I paid the engineer on that basis afterward—and put his name in my will, as I have said.

When the throbbing machine came to a stand, I clambered down without a word to the astonished engineer, and dashed, like the madman that I was, up the road leading to the old Algonquin claim. There was a rugged mile of it, and one is no longer an athlete at fifty, but at last, with every muscle straining to the point of collapse, I came in sight of the new power-house at the head of the gulch—of that, and of a brief tableau in the road nearer at hand.

A hundred yards away, and on the opposite side of the stream, Mexican George was clambering impetuously up the slope of the mountain, unheeding the shouts of a man running down the road with a poised rifle. Half-way between me and the shouting pursuer, I saw Kate. Her horse had taken fright at the noise, and

was bounding and curveting under her. While I looked, Cartwright stopped and brought the rifle to his face. At the same instant, as if warned by some mysterious impulse, he glanced back at the dam. In that pregnant second, the solid wall of masonry was jarred to its foundations; there was a muffled explosion, and the dam heaved slowly outward.

In the turning of a leaf, Cartwright had flung his weapon away and bounded to the side of the snorting horse. I had a fleeting glimpse of the rescue. I saw him snatch Kate from the saddle and dart up the precipitous mountain-side with her in his arms; saw that, and heard the roar of the angry flood, and had time to thank God out of a full heart before I went down in the bellowing rush of waters.

They picked me up at the mouth of the cañon, sodden and bruised, but not quite as dead as I might have been; saved, they said, by my utter weariness which made



Drawn by A. C. Redwood

"MAKING FRUITLESS EFFORTS TO TURN IN AN ALARM."

me go down limp and passive, like a child or a drunken man. Cartright took charge of things, got me back to Denver, and he and Kate nursed me back to what there is left of life for one who has measured his first half-century.

I don't know to this day how much Philip knows about my share in the demolition of his plant; but that is a matter apart.

No son could have been kinder to me than he has been; and he has a wise head on his young shoulders for all his impudence, as I have reason to know. It was many months before I could attend to business, and after they were married, he lifted the burden in my stead and carried it like a man.

But that, too, is a matter apart. What I had in mind when I began was to tell the story of the first skirmish with the electric trust. Properly speaking, that ends with the crumbling of the dam in the cañon, but I desire to add one word in my own defense. It is not my fault that

the preliminary victory merely delayed the march of the great monopoly. You will observe that I did what I could with the means at hand, and that I hoped for nothing more than an armistice in which we might be able to make better terms for ourselves.

"But there is no such thing as an electric trust!" you say? My incredulous friend, compare your telegraph and telephone charges, your power and light bills, with those of ten years ago. Do you perceive any diminution in them? Do you pay less for your electric service now than you did before nine-tenths of the patents ran out?

I think not; and if you haven't happened to hear of the Electric Conservation Company, it merely proves that my son-in-law and his associates in business have learned somewhat of prudence and secresy since they builded their first experiment station in El Remo Cañon, and served printed notices on the Denver electric companies.

THE PLAGUE IN INDIA.

THE BISHOP THOBURN SPECIAL FUND FOR INDIA.

REV. ROCKWELL CLANCY, Secy.

ALLAHABAD, INDIA, NOV. 10, 1897.

JOHN BRISBEN WALKER, ESQ.,

Proprietor THE COSMOPOLITAN, Irvington, New York:

DEAR SIR:—Your letter of September 30th was received several days ago. We received the three hundred dollars, and are very grateful to you for your kindness in sending it. I am writing to-day to Mr. Marsh, of South Bend, Indiana, thanking him for the gift.

I am glad to tell you that the famine is practically at an end, though there is still much suffering, as millions had lost everything. The famine was the worst of the century. In the northwest provinces, with a population of forty-seven million, more than thirty-seven million received help. The relief given during the famine was equal to what would be necessary to feed the combined populations of Great Britain and India for one day. The people of India are indebted to every country in the world for help. India's terrible suffering touched the heart of the world. Among the gifts none was more appreciated than America's gift of grain. From the time the "City of Everett" sailed from San Francisco until she entered the Hoogly and anchored at Calcutta, plans were being made for the distribution of the grain. Railroads had offered to carry the grain free of charge; and when the grain arrived in the various centers of distribution, thousands of hungry people were anxiously waiting for a share. Many persons on receiving the grain parched it, and satisfied their hunger at the place of distribution. Doctor Hobbs, who came with the "City of Everett," visited the worst famine districts, and was actually worshiped by many of the people. * * * Again thanking you for your kindness, I am,

Yours sincerely,

ROCKWELL CLANCY.

THE STORY OF A WITCH AND SOME BEWITCHED.

BY O'NEILL LATHAM.

ONCE upon a time, in a hidden valley on the other side of the world, there lived a most bee-eautiful little Princess by the name of Rosepink.

The truth of the affair is (though her royal mamma never liked it mentioned—one can't be too reticent in such matters), the poor child was enchanted, and dwelt with a most terrifical old witch named Jane in a little house, made of a solid emerald, which stood in the middle of the valley.

The real name of the witch was never known, but the people of the country-side strongly suspected that the harmless name of Jane was merely a pseudonym, and her true title was, without doubt, something much more dreadful. Personally, I must confess, the old lady was a "sight"—she still wore a bustle, a false front and arctic overshoes (fancy it!), besides carrying any number of toads in her petticoat pocket, which receptacle she was seldom able to find when requiring a toad for any little matter, and so had to resort to conjuring to get it out. All of which peculiarities were in questionable taste, to say the least, and grated on Rosepink's sensibilities.

The witch had a young son whom she called Snilch (because of the general *snilchiness* of his disposition, the little Princess always said—but that's neither here nor there), and to this offspring, though he was far from interesting to the naked eye or reflecting mind, the enchantress was greatly attached, so much, indeed, that she frequently so far forgot herself as to bring him for his supper quite large plump children from the neighboring villages, although it must have been tedious to carry them.

As pressing business in the witchcraft line took her abroad a great deal of the time, it was necessary to leave Rosepink in the charge of this youth, and as that young lady was most fastidious and had from the cradle, as she often remarked, always been accustomed to the "best," one can easily see how bored she must have been with a companion who had neither good complexion nor any sense of decorum, whose efforts at conversation usually consisted in inopportune references to his

appetite, and abrupt announcements that he was ready and willing to eat anything that should come in sight, be it fish, flesh or canned goods.

Rosepink passed much of the time looking the other way and playing he wasn't there, though unfortunately he usually was. For, next to actual eating, Snilch liked to sit and look at the little Princess best of anything in the world. He had been heard to remark, with great respect and deep feeling, that he'd bet she would be extremely tender.

He followed her about all day long as she wandered up and down the valley, gazing at the great hills that confined her, upon the summits of which frightful dragons roared. And when she took a siesta upon a bank of violets with a view to improving her already exquisite complexion by repose, he would sit patiently by on a stone absently eating beetles from the garden walk, by way of filling in the time.

On the fine summer afternoon on which this history opens, he had been sitting thus for an hour, while the little Princess slept cosily curled up in the middle of a flower-bed, lulled by the singing of the enchanted birds, which not only gave the chirps and trills of every-day birds, but rendered all the latest dance airs and popular songs. Rosepink awoke with a sigh, and opening her dreamy eyes to the blue sky, murmured, "The Prince, ah me, where is the beautiful Prince!"

"What are you talking about?" said Snilch, folding up his napkin and putting his finger-bowl away in the lunch-basket he always carried. "There isn't any Prince."

"Why, certainly there is," retorted she, with ineffable scorn; "did you ever hear of an Enchanted Princess without there being a Prince somewhere about?"

"Well, maybe there is," assented he, glancing around with awakened interest and taking his napkin and salt cruet again from his basket.

"But, *mon Dieu!*" sighed Rosepink, with a pure though despairing Parisian accent, "why does he linger! How can I wait! I cannot."

"Oh, yes, I guess you can," interposed Snilch, in his vulgar way.

"And oh," continued she, raising her beautiful arms from the flowers where she lay and clasping her little hands; "oh, to think of my ten older sisters at home having all the latest gowns and bonnets while I, the fairest, languish here in the old pink China silk I've had two seasons! Dear me," she murmured, lifting a silver-mounted mirror that hung from her chate-laine. "When he comes he will find me a perfect *fright*—and yet"—added she, gazing carefully at her reflection—"not exactly."

At this the enchanted birds came down

from the trees and forming in a row along the garden walk, burst into song:

"When he comes in velvet dight,
With his prancing charger white,
All his golden harness bright
(Gay and bonny),
When he comes the witch to fight
And release the Heart's Delight,
He will think she is a fright
(Not exactly)."

"Who is coming to fight the witch, if you will excuse me for interrupting?" sarcastically inquired that lady herself, alighting from her broomstick and tethering it to a little diamond-mounted hitching-post. "For goodness's sake, clear out of the path," she continued. "One would



Drawn by O'Neill Latham

"WHEN HE COMES HE WILL FIND ME A PERFECT FRIGHT."

think you were a comic opera, and you know very well I consider the stage immoral. Go 'way!"

The crestfallen birds hopped to a little distance and stood about, each sadly winking one eye at the little Princess.

The witch produced a ham from her reticule and gave it to Snilch, who immediately put his napkin in his collar and taking two large slices of bread from his basket, made a sandwich and commenced his lunch. He did all this with a pleasant smile, for though he had few attractions for a person of Rosepink's cultivation, no one could deny that his was a cheerful disposition.

"Now if you'll be so good," his mother resumed, "tell me who it is that is coming to fight me."

The birds looked absent-minded and began to hum, as if to change the subject:

"Jiggledy, jaggledy, joogledy jum,
Bless my soul but the Joodle's come,
Come with his cane and high silk hat;
But my, he's forgotten his pink cravat!"

"Dear me," said the witch, "you have no more sense than a rabbit. Sometimes I wish I'd never enchanted you. But who would have thought you'd take to poetry!" Her trembling voice showed how bitterly she was disappointed in their characters, and bursting into tears, she began feeling in her pocket for her handkerchief, but bringing out a toad instead, she remembered her duty as hostess, and suddenly becoming very polite, turned to the little Princess.

"Oh, Miss Rosepink, won't you have a toad salad with mayonnaise for your luncheon?"

"No, thank you ever so much," replied that young lady. "I'll take a little honeydew," and she began drinking the sweetness from the flower-cups.

"You have such odd tastes," commented the witch, disparagingly. "Now, *I* never *could* touch it—but then I'm *so* particular. No doubt you take it to reduce your flesh—and heaven knows you *need* it!" She glanced from Rosepink's rounded arm to her own little bone and added, "*I* was always of a rather spirituelle type."

Then, turning to her son, she remarked in a pleasant tone: "Do you know, Snilchy, I saw the funniest thing in the forest this morning—a fellow sitting on a stone,

writing poetry, and his feet were turned the wrong way. I nearly died laughing and was just on the point of enchanting him and bringing him home—he'd be so odd to have about—but I get so tired of enchanting—it's quite a strain on the nerves—and I thought, besides, he'd be dropping into poetry all over the place and it's *so* untidy—a stanza here and a couplet there until everything's littered up. It's bad enough to have the birds!"

"Oh, mamma, *why* didn't you bring him for me?" cried poor Snilch in plaintive tones. "I need a change of menu dreadfully!"

"My poor famished babe!" cried the tender-hearted witch, seized with remorse for her thoughtlessness and pressing him to her bosom. "To think that your heartless mother could have neglected you so!" Always of an emotional nature, she was now overcome with excess of feeling, and jumping up began whirling about like a top, her little petticoats standing out like a balloon and toads flying from her pockets at every turn, until her sympathetic son recalled her to herself with the delicate reminder that the holes in her stockings were apparent.

Upon this she instantly sat down beside him and, with fine composure, changed the subject.

"How would you like Rosepink fricassée à la pet?" she asked in tender maternal tones.

"Oh, mamma!" was all that he could utter.

"You shall have her to-morrow with green peas. It is your birthday, dear, and I have been saving her for that purpose. You may have a party and invite the Hobbledy-gobbledies of Gobbledyburg and your cousins, the Squink children, to dine with you."

She paused to let Snilch express his delight, but the gentle child appeared thoughtful, even depressed.

"If you don't mind, mamma," he said timidly, "I'll be the party *myself*. Rosepink is such a *little* girl!"

The witch broke into peals of merriment, removing her false front to laugh more without interference.

"Oh, you will be the death of me," she cried, "you clever little thing!"

Snilch glanced proudly toward Rosepink



"SHE BEGAN DRINKING THE SWEETNESS FROM THE FLOWER-CUPS."

to see if she too had appreciated his wit, but the poor little Princess was weeping, while the birds walked around her in a ring, chanting dolefully:

"Farewell, my pretty;
Good-bye, little maid;
Oh, what a pity
To have her fricasseed"

Snileh was impressionable like his mother, and his lip trembled at this, but the witch, having no time for further sentiment, cheerfully readjusted her false front and tripped lightly to the broomstick, which had been pawing the turf impatiently. She mounted briskly and said: "I shan't be home till

morning, Snilehy, my pet, but you won't need any supper. Save your appetite for the party, you know."

She gave a merry wink as she departed, and her son, resuming his customary air of gentle gayety, began turning handsprings around the garden by way of working up a fine appetite for the morrow.

Little Rosepink could not sleep that night; the proposed birthday dinner weighed strangely on her mind, poor child; and while Snileh was dreaming she stole out to pace the garden sorrowfully, as the owls made their lonely cry and the moon floated calmly across its track regardless of her fate.

Three times she strove wildly to climb the hillside, but, as she had learned to anticipate from sad experience, the enchanted thicket closed in before her, barring the way, while on the crest of the ascent she heard the dragon hiss.

Holding her hands to her trembling heart after one of these rebuffs, she walked the length of the garden crying pitifully, her tears falling upon the gravel with mournful little thuds, when suddenly, at a turn in the path, she came upon a young person sitting on one of the benches and writing in a notebook by the light of the moon.

"Excuse me," she said politely, "but are you the Prince?"

Without interrupting his occupation or glancing up, the person drew his card from his pocket and handed it to her. On it was inscribed in large red letters:

"JOHNARIO SMITHINI,
EXTRAORDINARY POET.
Short Poems for Short People
and Vice-versa.
A Dozen Select Sonnets thrown in
with Each Epic Sold."

"Oh, yes," said Rosepink, in an interested way, as she returned the card.

"Name and business, please," said the person, still without raising his eyes from his writing. "What's wanted? Rondel, sonnet, quatrain, triolet—Love, Spring, Sympathy, The Little Grave, To Flora? All at reduced prices. Well, what the Doodle *do* you want in the way of poetry, anyway?" He finished impatiently.

"I don't think I need any to-night, thank you," she said timidly. "I didn't come on business. I'm only a little Enchanted Princess."

"What!" he ejaculated, jumping up and looking at her through a pair of opera-glasses. "By the Breakfast of Immortal Jove, why didn't you say so at first! Sit down here a moment till I make an ode to you. I've been looking for a Princess all my life."

He lifted her onto the bench, and sitting down beside her began to write very rapidly, every now and again raising his opera-glasses to take notes on her appearance. When he had finished and was leaning back, rapturously reading his poem while he counted off the syllables on his fingers, Rosepink ventured to speak.

"Do you know where any princes are, Mr. Smithini?"

He shook his head, beating time to the verse with his hands and feet.

"I asked merely because I'm to be eaten to-morrow," she explained, "and if you happened to know of anybody who might have time to rescue me——"

Mr. Smithini put his notebook carefully away and consulted his watch.

"Why, yes," he said courteously. "I shouldn't mind doing it myself under the circumstances, if it wouldn't take too long. You see, I just came over here for a constitutional. I hope you wouldn't mind being written a little poetry to on the way."

"Oh, not at all," she said eagerly. "I'd be greatly obliged if you *would* rescue me—that is if it's convenient."

"Oh, you're quite welcome," said he, rising. "Have you anything to pack?"

She said "No," and he took her hand and led her toward the garden gate. As they walked, Rosepink could not help noticing that his feet were turned backward, but as he appeared to be quite a gentleman in other particulars, she tried to overlook it.

When they passed out to the edge of the wood that covered the hill she explained that it was enchanted so that the underbrush and vines closed in whenever she tried to pass.

"I'm afraid I'm a pretty hard person to rescue," she added, apologetically; "besides, there are dragons at the top."

"How odd," said her companion, very much interested. "I didn't happen to meet them on the way down. But I think I can manage all this for you."

Even as he spoke, the thicket made itself impassable before them—brambles twined themselves across the way, and all the vegetation knotted and intertwined into a dense barrier. "Well, I do declare!" exclaimed the Poet, and sitting down on a stone with the little Princess beside him, he began to read one of his epics. At the second canto, to the astonishment and delight of poor Rosepink, the brambles were scurrying away as fast as they could for their tangles, young saplings and bushes were hopping off and quite large, dignified trees were

scampering away on their curly roots.

"There now," said the Poet; but he seemed offended at something. He sneered as he looked after the escaping forest and muttered, "Phœbus, what an uncultivated lot!"

Nevertheless, the whole hillside being now quite bare except for here and there a hurrying baby-tree that couldn't keep up with the rest, he took Rosepink's hand and they resumed their journey.

It was a steep, rocky hill, and hard to climb, but the little Princess skipped from stone to stone like a fairy and executed

yelephants, with ladies and gentlemen for entrées."

"Oh, Hyperion of the corkscrew curls!" groaned the Poet, "why did I ever go into the rescuing business? I *never* had any taste for this sort of thing!"

He sat thoughtfully down and wrote a farewell poem to the little Princess, and then patting her on the head said in a voice full of emotion: "Now, run back, little girl. I'll have to be going. You see, I can probably get out of this thing by myself, but I couldn't very well with you, as he's kept here especially to guard you,



Drawn by O'Neill Lathrop.

"LARGE AND DIGNIFIED TREES WERE SCAMPERING AWAY ON THEIR CURLY ROOTS."

joyful little jigs at every tenth step, and she was so charming that the Poet had to stop every now and then to write a sonnet on her.

As they approached the summit, however, her joy gave place to terror, for the howl of the dragon was distinctly audible. Her companion trembled so that the poems rattled in his pockets.

"Do you suppose he cares for poetry, your Highness?" he whispered.

"I'm afraid he prefers beef," she sighed. "I have heard he eats whole cows, and even

you know. And anyway, though I hesitated to mention it, it would hardly have been correct form for me to rescue a young *unchaperoned* lady. It would have been just a little odd, you understand."

"Oh, you're not going to leave me to be Snileh's birthday dinner!" And falling on her knees the poor little Princess began to sob convulsively. "Oh, my Prince, my beautiful Prince," she cried. "Where are you now—and how can you leave me to perish!" And so lovely did she look in her despair that the Poet was compelled to

jot down an ode before leaving her. This was unfortunate for him, because the dragon, attracted by the sound of Rosepink's weeping, came strolling from his lair with his scaly tail trailing a hundred feet behind him.

"For mercy's sake, what *is* the matter with you people!" he roared, in a very cross tone, and as they were unable to reply from fright, he howled, "Why don't you talk?"

"You're—you're so abrupt!" squeaked the Poet.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," replied the dragon ironically, and began to hum:

"Rumpity, tumpity, tumpity tound,
A couple of fine fat pies I've found.
I'll roast the young and boil the old,
And serve one hot and serve one cold
Oh, all is mine on enchanted ground,
Be it short or long or square or round,
For this is the law I made one day
In my genteel, off-handed way.
Tumpity, tumpity tound."



"CAME STROLLING FROM HIS LAIR WITH HIS SCALY TAIL TRAILING A HUNDRED FEET BEHIND."

"You see, I call all victuals 'pies,' " he explained, with a gigantic smile, as he finished.

"Oh, how lovely," cried the Poet. "Is there any more?"

"Any more *what*?" asked the dragon.

"Of the poetry—my spirit was transported!"

"Oh, that's nothing," the dragon replied, blushing in a pleased way. "I often do that when I don't think, you know. It's easy as eating with me—my uncle was that way, too."

"Indeed," exclaimed the Poet, "how delectable!" But he nudged the little Princess and sneered as if he did not think very highly of it, really. This was not noticed, however, by the dragon, who turned to Rosepink and asked her where she was going.

"I'm only an Enchanted Princess," she replied, diffidently, "and this gentleman was rescuing me when you met us. I hope you have no objection, sir."

"Oho, so you're Aunt Jane's Enchanted Princess, are you?" exclaimed the dragon.

"Why, the idea!"

"Is the witch your auntie, sir?" she asked.

"Oh, she's not kin, exactly, but she lets us call her Auntie for short, you know. Nice old lady—in her way— isn't she?"

"Y-e-s," replied Rosepink, somewhat doubtfully.

"Well," said he, looking cheerfully at the Poet, "come on to my den. I fancy you'll do if you boil long enough, though you certainly have a tough appearance, raw. The Princess can wait over there, too, till Aunt Jane comes to fetch her."

"Oh, Mr. Dragon," cried Rosepink, "please don't keep me till she comes—

please don't, 'cause she's going to let Snilch have me fricasseed for his birthday!"

"Dear no," interposed the Poet—suavely, even in the face of his own dreadful fate. "I shouldn't let her be taken back if I were you. She's very *nice* for a Princess, and a first-rate inspiration for poetry."

"Oh, come on," said the dragon wearily; "I know my business, and she's got to go back. Dear me, what do you suppose Aunt Jane took the trouble to enchant her for, anyway! Besides, I don't need any inspiration for *my* poetry. It comes so easy for *me*, you know."

Upon which, he seized them in his great claw and carried them to his cave, where he set them down before a tremendous fire over which a good-sized cow, in an im-

mense pot, was boiling for his breakfast.

The two captives sat down on the rocky floor and wept.

"Oh, your Highness," lamented the Poet, shedding large tears on his heels. "Oh, your Highness, why did I ever go in for rescuing! It's so out of my line!"

"There, don't feel so badly," said she kindly. "At least you will die nobly, striving to succor the oppressed."

"Why, that's so—I had overlooked that," he replied, quite delighted, and taking out a thick pad of tinted paper, he immediately began a beautiful eulogy upon himself, in blank verse, whistling gayly as he wrote.

When the dragon asked in thundering tones what he was doing there, he merely waved his hand for silence.

Poor little Rosepink rose and began to walk up and down the cave, the floor of which was strewn with bones of all sizes and shapes. Once or twice she tripped over a human skull. She wrung her little hands and cried, "Oh, my Prince—my beautiful Prince—come or I shall surely die." She repeated this several times in her despair, when suddenly her attention was arrested by a deep sigh which seemed to issue from a shadowy corner of the cave, and as she paused, listening, it came again, even more low and sorrowful.

She stole softly toward the place whence it arose and peered into the darkness, and as her eyes became accustomed to the gloom, she saw that a slender fawn was standing there, tied to the wall by a cord.

Realizing what must be its fate, she put her arms about its delicate neck and stroked it pityingly, leaning her cheek upon its brow. In an instant she started back astounded. The beautiful creature had murmured in her ear the name the enchanted birds had given her, "Heart's Delight."

Before she could recover from her surprise, the dragon commanded her to return to the fireside.

There the Poet, who had just finished his eulogy, was speaking haughtily to his captor.

"I trust," he said, "you will have my masterpieces published when I am gone. My poems on the little Princess, alone, are sufficient to make my fame more radiant than that of any poet of the century—in fact, of any century. Have them done in gold on pink paper, broad margins, rough edges, and my half-tone portrait in the front, please."

"Oh, certainly," said the dragon, quite overcome. "Might I ask—would you be so condescending as to read me one or two? It will be so nice to say I have heard them from your own lips when you—are—are gone, you know."



Drawn by F. Neil Latholm

"THE FAWN SPED ONWARD IN STRONG LEAPS."

THE STORY OF A WITCH AND SOME BEWITCHED.

Before he had half finished, the Poet had all his poems from his pockets and piled in a tall heap before him. He began in measured tones.

At the end of half an hour, the dragon's tail waved wearily to and fro while he concealed great yawns behind his claw, but he was a very polite dragon and would not interrupt his guest. Two tears of utter fatigue rolled down his patient though scaly cheeks, and when two hours had passed he lay sleeping like an innocent babe.

"Well," said the Poet, rising and glancing at his watch as he put his MS. away, "it's time I should be getting home to breakfast. Good-evening, your Highness, and thanks ever so much for letting me write all that poetry to you."

"Oh, please take me, Mr. Smithini," she begged, but the Poet blushed slightly. "If you *only* had a chaperon," he said in a voice full of regret, and dropping a tear he bowed and left the cave.

The little Princess hid her face in her hands and gave way to sobs. Suddenly she heard her name softly called. Springing up she ran lightly to the fawn. "At least you shall go free, my poor little friend," she whispered, and snipped the cord that held him, then leading him gently to the door of the cave, kissed him between the eyes and bade him fly for his life.

He did not stir, and she glanced back in terror at the sleeping dragon, then besought him again to go and save himself. He lifted his face to hers and whispered to her to mount upon his glossy back. She hesitated one moment in amazement, then obeyed him, and they were speeding down the farther slope of the hill, across far-stretching meadows, dim in the moonlight, through tangled reaches of flowers nodding in their drowse, before the little Princess could realize what had occurred.

The little feet of the fawn seemed scarcely to touch the ground, and the wind rushing by swept her robe out behind and carried her long hair back, sparkling with dew from the flowers that brushed it.

Far away they heard the roar of the awakened dragon, and glancing fearfully back, the little Princess saw two streams of flame from his nostrils illumining the night. She clung only more closely to the

neck of the fawn until, when several miles were left behind, he slackened his speed to breathe, then she slipped to the ground and stroked him, chirping her joy and gratitude, while his great wistful eyes dwelt upon her in a strange, tender way.

Suddenly, they both glanced up with beating hearts.

Not a quarter of a mile away in the sky, now growing gray with dawn, was a peculiar dark object flying toward them with long swoops and shrieking as it came.

"The witch—the witch," wailed Rose-pink, and would have fainted as she resumed her seat had not the rushing of the wind revived her as the fawn sped onward in strong leaps.

Faster and faster came the dreadful pursuer in the air. The little Princess could see the broomstick and the dangling overshoes distinctly, and she knew that when they were overtaken they would instantly be enchanted out of their wits and driven back to death.

"No, no," she thought, "this little one must not suffer too," and leaning forward she whispered in the fawn's ear, as she caressed his panting throat:

"Let me down, dear friend, leave me. You can save yourself, for it is only me she seeks. Stop and leave me here." She was about to throw herself to the ground when he cried, in a voice that compelled her to obey:

"Lovely Princess, stay with me!
I am not what I seem to be.
I've spanned the mountains, crossed the sea,
And lost my life for love of thee."

She had no time to wonder at the strangeness of these words, for the witch was not a hundred yards away as she buried her face on his neck and murmured:

"I'll cling to thee, come gain, come loss;
But fly to a stream, for she cannot cross."

She dared not look up again, but lay silent and trembling, awaiting the dreadful spell their enemy was sure to throw upon them. In a moment, however, she heard the plashing of a brook around the feet of the fawn and then the baffled shriek of their enemy as she swooped to the ground too late, for as everybody knows, no witch can cross running water.

The little Princess did not dare look up until the opposite bank was reached, so she was spared the sight of the frightful creature rudely striking after them with her broomstick, though the poor child heard her horrible screams. No sooner were they safe on the farther shore, than her spirit quite returned, and springing lightly from the fawn's back, she called to the witch with a mischievous smile: "I'm afraid I can't attend Snilch's birthday party, Aunt Jane—so nice of you to invite me."

"Don't mention it," replied the old lady, concealing her rage while she hunted in her pocket for a toad to throw. "But la, Rosepink, I never thought you'd disappoint Snilchy like this—and he always thought so much of you, too."

"Well, I'm very sorry if he feels badly, but really——" stammered the tender-hearted little Princess.

"Yes, you're mighty sorry for the poor boy, ain't you?—you horrid, narrow-minded, selfish, little *snip-perty-mopperty*!"

After uttering these shocking words she looked cross-eyed and stuck out her tongue, then, without so much as a good-by, mounted her broomstick and disappeared in the sky.

Rosepink gave a merry little laugh, and turning to the fawn threw her arms around him, crying, "Oh, I love you with all my heart!" But no sooner had she done so than she gave a cry of alarm, for instead of a fawn, a tall young Prince stood before her.

"Oh, my goodness, excuse me, sir," she stammered,



Drawn by O'Neill Latham.

"KISSED HER TWO OR THREE TIMES, AT WHICH SHE SEEMED VERY MUCH ASTONISHED."

but he said, in the most charming of voices: "Don't be frightened, my little Heart's Delight. I have sought for you ever since leaving college (expelled, but that's neither here nor there), and when I was on the point of finding you, was cruelly enchanted by that same wicked old Aunt Jane, and handed over to the dragon for a sandwich. But little did she think when she told me I must remain a fawn until some young Princess should say 'I love you' in my ear,

"Oh, my Prince, my beautiful Prince!" and the Beautiful Prince lifted her little chin and kissed her two or three times, at which she was very much astonished.

And while this was going on, the Poet, Mr. Johnario Smithini, who had been hiding from the witch in a thicket near by, scrambled out with his pad in his hand, saying, "Olympian Jove! but you two need a chaperon! Nevertheless, please



Drawn by O'Neill Latham.

"RODE HOME TO HIS CASTLE."

that it would be her own little captive who was to say those magic words so sweetly and release me from my bondage."

"I don't believe I said any such thing!" said Rosepink, pretending to pout, upon which the Prince, who had learned a great many things at college, pretended to be very, very sad, and the tears came to Rosepink's eyes at that, so she put out her little hands saying:

don't move till I finish this sonnet on Young Love. You're a splendid inspiration."

And the Prince's great white horse, with his golden trappings, was still tied to the tree where his master had left him, and the Beautiful Prince took the Heart's Delight up behind him and rode home to his castle, where they lived happily ever after.



THE REAL "ARABIAN NIGHTS."

BY ANNA LEACH.

TO the majority of people who read "The Thousand and One Nights" in the nursery, and who know it only in the translations made from Galland's French, it is a book of enchantments and adventures and nothing more.

When Galland discovered the Arabian manuscripts, it is doubtful that he realized the value of his find. It is certain that the Arabians themselves put no great value upon the collection. The Arabian critics were as sober a lot of gentlemen as are found in the same class to-day, and sometimes overlooked human interest. When, once or twice during the lapse of centuries, they mentioned the romances, it was as a "corrupt book of silly tales."

But when, about ten years ago, an Arabic scholar discovered the story of Aladdin among the Persian manuscripts in the Louvre, there was rejoicing among the Orientalists and the critics generally. They felt that something had been added to human history, so thoroughly had the value of the collection come to be known.

The two definite Arabic references to the "Nights" occur in works of the tenth century. In these we are told that the tales come from a Persian book called "Hizār Afsāna" ("Thousand Tales"). But they are Mohammedan through and through, and according to the best scholars belong to the eighth or tenth century of our era.

Upon this collection has been embroidered



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HASAN OF BASSORAH.

"Out came ten afrits, with their feet in the bowels of the earth and their heads in the clouds."

all the folk-lore of the Eastern story-tellers. These story-tellers still tell their tales in the coffee-houses and camps of the East, and Richard Burton, to whom we owe the perfect translation, made himself into one of these raconteurs on his journey to Mecca, and learned the spirit of the tales so thoroughly that he was able to tell them to his Arab friends as they sat about their camp-fires without his companions once suspecting that he was not an Arab and a Mohammedan.

Before he and Lane took up the work of making English translations, Europe used entirely the work of Antoine Galland, and even to-day our popular "Arabian Nights" is full of Gallicisms which necessarily came

from the French through which it was strained.

Galland's first edition appeared in Paris in 1704. He was a poor boy who came to Paris and rose to be antiquary to the King. He traveled extensively in the East, officially, and during his lifetime it was supposed that he gathered the tales there, but it is now generally believed that he discovered them in the Paris libraries.

The tales instantly became so popular that no other book was talked of. The French people were tired of philosophy and the chill of the classics, and the tales were full of imagination, humor and strange charm. But below their wit, and their interest as stories, lies something deeper.

Like the folk-lore of all countries, they are full of history, religion, and profound, if unconscious, studies of the inner life of the people. These tales are an epitome of the life of the Arab in Asia during his best days, and give a more perfect picture of him than any historian has ever given of any people in any time. We see the gorgeously colored life of a brilliant period moving as if living before us. It would have been impossible for any one author to do this in any one tale. During the centuries in which the stories came down by word of mouth, they were revised a thousand times by the critics who listened to them. When experience proved any point unnatural—untrue to the life of the

people—it was eliminated, and the stories were polished as they were passed along. Those which were not worth keeping naturally dropped out on the way.

The stories are almost as full of religion as of love. First and foremost they are love stories. The enchantments, the afrits, the jinn, the flying horses, are all for the bringing together of the lovers—or for separating them that after incredible dangers they may at last be happy.

Almost the only one of the stories which is entirely taken up with war is that of Gharib and his brother Ajib. This is full of ridicule of all that is not Moslem, and runs over with exaggeration. Those who read between the lines of all folk-lore stories tell us that Gharib is the sun-god Ra of the Egyptians. The four-headed king of the jinn, and the mar-



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ABU KIR THE DYER.

"So the captain set the sack in the boat till he came to the palace, when he saw the King seated in the lattice."



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ABU MOHAMMED, RIGHT LAZYBONES.

"So I mounted on his back and he flew up with me into the firmament."

ids, the giants Kaylajan and Kurajan, who were able to carry human beings in their hands like toys, are all symbolic of the universal mythological characters, according

to the accounts of the folk-lore students.

We are also driven by these enthusiasts to finding symbols and gods in almost every one of the stories. The queen of



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ALA-AL-DIN ABU AL SHAMAH.

"One of the Bedouins leveled his javelin . . . and behold! he saw a hand turn the lance away from his breast."

the serpents is Ka, the mother-goddess of the stories for what they are to all of us. India, who received from heaven the seed "The Queen of the Serpents" was left out of life. But it is much more entertaining of Lane's translation. He regarded it as made up of extravagant



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ABDULLAH THE FISHERMAN AND ABDULLAH THE MERMAN.

"In came the merman's wife, who was beautiful of form and favor, and with her two children."

absurdities. Burton, who was much more learned in Orientalism, set great value upon it. was shown a door by a scorpion. Going through, he found a hillock, surmounted by a golden throne studded with wondrous

Hasib Karim al Din, a good young man, gems. This throne was surrounded by



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THE QUEEN OF THE SERPENTS.

"There came up to him a serpent as big as a mule, bearing on its back a tray of gold, wherein lay another serpent which shone like crystal, and whose face was that of a woman."

seats of gold and leek-green emeralds. Hasib took the time to count these seats and found that they numbered twelve thousand. He had already mounted the throne, and, bewildered by his counting, he fell asleep.

Presently he was aroused by a loud hissing and rustling, and opened his eyes to see all the seats occupied by enormous serpents, their eyes blazing like twenty-four thousand living coals. After a while a serpent as big as a mule came up to him, bearing on its back a tray of gold, wherein lay another serpent who shone like crystal, and whose face was that of a woman, and who spoke with human speech. She saluted Hasib, and then a great serpent

came and lifted her from her dish, while the other serpents fell down to do her homage.

Burton tells us that these are the Naga, the Hindoostanee gods who guard the earth treasures. The queen feasted Hasib, and took occasion to tell him her adventures. These naturally ran into the tales of Bulukiya and Jaushah.

Bulukiya seems to come near to us and our history, for he was the son of a King of Israel. When his father, who was a learned sage bent double with much poring over books, died, Bulukiya reigned in his stead; and after the sacred offices were performed he went to the vaults to investigate the treasures of his kingdom. He found himself in a little closet, wherein stood a column of white marble. On this lay a casket of ebony. In the

casket the young King found an account of the prophet Mohammed, which his father had carefully concealed from him. The account told how Mohammed should be sent in the latter days to be the lord of the first prophets and the last.

On reading the personal description of him, Bulukiya's heart burnt with love. He assembled all the notables of the children of Israel, the priests, the cohens or diviners, and acquainted them with the book. With the zeal of a new convert, he wished to destroy the body of his father, but the cohens pointed out how unfilial such conduct would be, however great the provocation.

The narrative tells us that the old King

had cut the account from the Book of Abraham, concealing it from all living men. But destiny brought it to convert his son, who set off to learn more of the Prophet.

In his journeys Bulukiya found the serpent queen, who told him of a wondrous herb which would take him dry-shod over the sea. Later, Bulukiya told this to Affan, a sage in Jerusalem, who wished to cross the seas to the tomb of Solomon, who lay with the signet-ring on his finger. The tale, in the original, makes no mention of this ring's meaning the circle of months forming the year, or of its bearing the signet stone on which were inscribed the two triangles intersecting one another and making the masonic sign of the Temple-builders; but the Orientalists so interpret it.

The sage and the convert trapped the serpent queen, and carried her cage aloft through the forest while the plants called out their virtues to her. In this way they discovered the plant they sought, and were able to reach the tomb of Solomon in the midst of the seven seas.

Solomon lay in his robes of green on his bed of gold, the ring gleaming like fire on a finger of his right hand. This was the ring which would give dominion over the earth. Affan directed Bulukiya to say incantations while he took the ring, but as it was touched a terrible serpent sprang out, blowing a blast of fire before which Bulukiya fled, but which reduced Affan to a heap of ashes.

The story of Jaush-

ah is accompanied by jinn, who, we are told, represent rain-clouds.

But the average reader cares nothing for the minor meanings. He follows Jaushah and his wife, who can fly in the air, through their perils and loves until the jinn finally conquer their enemies by the simple expedient of lifting them—elephants, troops of horse, and all—up into the clouds and dropping them to the earth again.

The tales have been condemned in some quarters for their frankness. (Sir Richard Burton points out that the Oriental has a plainness of speech which resembles that of the time of Shakespeare. He is naïve in his simple rendering of facts. But all



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THE ADVENTURES OF BULUKIYA.

"A mighty serpent came forth from beneath it and cried out to him with a terrible cry."



Copyright by Francis & Taylor. IT'HAAR AND HIS BRETHREN

"Behold the water disappeared and uncovered the door of the treasure."

through the tales we never find a case where vice is condoned. Their manners and customs are not ours, but when the core is reached they are moral. Many

times great events turn upon an unexpected appreciation of what even our civilization recognizes as a spiritual truth.

In the story of Abdullah the fisherman



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THE HISTORY OF ALI.

"The king of the jinn, whom they saw seated on the throne, with four heads to his body," and Abdullah the merman, of whom the former had once caught the latter in a net, we find this.

The two became great friends, and through the treasures of the sea brought up by the merman, Abdullah the fisherman became rich and great. He was finally granted the boon of visiting the bottom of

the sea. But the earth-man was not happy there, and was taken home again. As he started upward to the air, he was given a purse of gold and told to place it as an offering to the Prophet.

As the two friends were on their way to the shore, Abdullah the fisherman saw a great company of the sea people gathered together eating and drinking and holding high festival.

"Is there a wedding among you?" he asked.

"Nay," replied the merman. "One of them has died."

The astonished fisherman turned to him and asked, "Is this the custom when one dies?"

"Why should you wonder?" the mer-

man asked. "What happens when one of you die?"

Quoth Abdullah, "When one dieth amongst us, we weep for him, and the women beat their faces and rend the bosoms of their raiment in token of mourning for the dead."

Abdullah the merman stared at him, and then said, "Give me the purse." After a moment he added: "I have broken our friendship. From this day we shall no longer see each other."

"Why?" asked the bewildered fisherman.

"Are you not of Allah?"

"I am."

"Why, then, is it grievous to you that Allah should take back his own, and why

should you weep over it? How can I trust thee with an offering to the Prophet, seeing that when a child is born to you you rejoice, albeit the Almighty setteth the soul there as a deposit, and yet when he taketh it again it is grievous to you, and you weep and mourn? Since it is hard for thee to give back what belongs to Allah, how shall it be easy to you to give up what belongs to the Prophet? Therefore I need not your companionship."

These tales prove again that the beliefs and ideas of certain portions of humanity are much the same in all parts of the earth at all times. Throughout them we find a belief in the "kiramat," or saint's miracle. In many of them men tell how they were saved by their "pir," or patron. Mr. Letchford, who worked long with



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THE HISTORY OF GHARIB

"Kaylajan came forward and snatched up the Prince and Korajan caught up the King and the twain flew back to Gharib."



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THE STORY OF JAUSHAIL.

"Hung him high in the air over his camp that he might witness the slaughter of his men."

Sir Richard Burton, and from whose seventy paintings accompanying the tales these illustrations are taken, was directed by the great Orientalist to paint the picture of

Ala-al-din Abu's being saved in this way, according to the popular ideas of such interventions.

Ala-al-din was the son of a merchant

who went off with a caravan. The Bedouins had slain many of his companions, but when a spear was presented at Ala, a hand turned the lance.

In the Galland edition there was no poetry, and it is astonishing when one first sees the real work to find it so largely metrical. Here are preserved the poems of the people, full of that fatalism which we have learned to know in the Rubaiyat.

In "The Ladies of Bagdad" we find:

"We trod the steps appointed for us;
And the man whose steps are appointed must tread them.

He whose death is decreed to take place in one land will not die in any land but that."

And again:

"When Allah willeth an event to befall a man endowed with reason and hearing and sight,

He deafeneth his ears, and blindeth his heart, and draweth his reason from him as a hair.

Till, having fulfilled His purpose against him, He restoreth him to reason that he may be admonished."

This fatalism takes the form in all the stories of the absolute invincibility of love. Love can open any door, can conquer any enemy. However the lovers are separated, and no matter how long, they will come together again and live in happiness until the coming of the "Separator of Companions and the Terminator of Delights."

We who confine our historical studies to Europe have little idea of the life of the East during the centuries which are pictured in the "Arabian Nights."

Bagdad, in the ninth century, was the Paris of the world's civilization. Her

population was enormous. Sir Richard Burton calls our attention to the fact that in a war in 1258, two centuries later, eight hundred thousand of her sons fell. By a system of waterways and roads, and a great postal service of mounted couriers, she was able to bring in great tribute from the world outside. The Caliphs realized more and more the need of education, and each mosque had a library, and learned professors who gave lectures to classes daily. Learning was universal.

Sir Richard Burton devoted thirty years of his life to making an ideal translation, and his friend, Albert Letchford, has done almost as great a work in his pictures, giving, as Burton declared, the only real illustrations to the "Nights" ever made, picturing the people's spirit as well as surroundings.



ILLUSTRATION BY EDWIN LONG.

HISTORY OF PRINCE DARRIL.

"As soon as he touched the bottom he was confronted by an afrit."